

Ethiopian hijack shortlived

SANAA (AP) — An Ethiopian passenger plane bound for Addis Ababa was briefly hijacked Monday and landed in the Yemeni capital, where all 156 passengers and crew members were safely released, an official announcement said. The Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 707 was on a flight from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It was commandeered by a lone Ethiopian pirate as it approached Djibouti for a scheduled transit stop on its way to the Ethiopian capital. Mohammad Abdullah Al Fageeh, director-general of Sanaa international airport, said that the air pirate stormed the cockpit and demanded that the plane be diverted to London. Authorities in southern Yemen denied the plane permission to land in Aden for refuelling. Djibouti also refused to receive the aircraft. The plane circled for two hours over the Red Sea country until Sanaa allowed it to land here.

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U.S. accepts Aqaba-based sanction-verification regime

King meets Christopher in London, says siege being lifted

By P.V. Vivekanand with agency dispatches

THE UNITED STATES has accepted a Jordanian proposal on a new land-based system for verifying compliance with the international sanctions against Iraq and the arrangement would be in place soon, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Monday.

The acceptance came after months of deliberations which prompted His Majesty King Hussein to link Jordan's return to the Washington-backed peace talks with Israel to an end to the sea-based inspections of all Jordan-bound vessels by a U.S.-led naval force.

Mr. Christopher made the announcement after meeting His Majesty King Hussein in London.

"I informed His Majesty that subject to some fine-tuning the U.S. government will support the establishment of a land-based regime for verifying enforcement of U.N. sanctions against Iraq," Mr. Christopher said in a prepared statement.

"Inspection will be carried

out by a private, independent, not-for-profit company of an international stature and integrity, the Lloyds Register of the United Kingdom which will operate in the port of Aqaba," he said.

"The U.S. is convinced that this new regime will be as effective as the MIF (multinational interception force) in guaranteeing that no Iraqi trade will transit Aqaba other than the transactions which have been specifically permitted by the United Nations."

"Indeed we believe that in some respect the land-based inspections would be an improvement in our ability to enforce sanctions against Iraq."

Also addressing the press after the meeting at his residence at Ascot, west of London, the King said that the secretary of state had told him that "the siege (of Aqaba) is being lifted and they have accepted our own suggestion for another method."

"They have accepted our

view concerning the siege and the treatment of Jordan in a manner that we could not bear or accept," the King said. "The problem is being solved in an appropriate manner."

Asked whether Jordan had accepted a date to return to the peace talks with Israel, the King reiterated Jordan's commitment to a negotiated peace in the Middle East and said: "We will look at developments that occur."

"We have offered a lot to attain a just peace... perhaps more than any other party," said the King. "We are committed to do the impossible for that peace and the return of the Palestinian rights."

In Amman earlier in the day, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali told reporters that the concerned U.S. agencies and departments have reached a "consensus" on the Jordanian proposal for a land-based regime at Aqaba to verify the enforcement of sanctions against Iraq.

But Dr. Majali stressed that the proposal did not simply replace the sea-based "inspec-

tions" with on-shore "inspections."

There is a definite difference between "inspection" and "observation," he said, adding that Lloyds Register will be free to see all incoming and outgoing cargo when it is inspected by Jordan's customs department as is required by the Kingdom's law and make reports.

But it will not do any "inspections," he stressed. "Aqaba is not on the border between Jordan and Iraq," he said. "Aqaba is our border with the outside world," he said, adding that as such Jordan would not accept any arrangement that would infringe upon its sovereignty.

It was not immediately clear whether the "fine-tuning" that Mr. Christopher mentioned was a reference to a common ground between "inspection" and "observation."

The U.S. official did say, however, that the U.S. needed to consult its partners in the MIF before finalising the arrangement.

According to Jordanian offi-

cials and diplomats in Amman, the U.S. allies, particularly Britain and France, were supportive of the Jordanian stand and there should not be any major problem before the arrangement goes into place at Aqaba.

According to a U.S. official who briefed reporters, Jordan will pay for the new system. He indicated the new system would be operating within several weeks.

A spokeswoman for Lloyd's Register confirmed that the company had been approached but no agreement had been concluded.

The U.S. official, who briefed reporters Monday estimated that about one in 10 ships headed for Jordan were turned away.

The official said Jordan had complained of losing \$300 million a year because of the marine interceptions, while the land-based system will cost an estimated \$2 million to \$3 million a year.

Lloyd's Register, founded in 1760, describes itself as the world's leading ship classifica-



His Majesty King Hussein answers a question as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher

listens at a press conference held on Monday at the King's residence near London (AFP photo)

tion society, and surveys ships on behalf of more than 130 governments to insure that they comply with national and international safety requirements.

In their comments in London, both the King and Mr.

Christopher described their talks as positive and constructive.

"I am happy to say that we've had a very fruitful discussion on a number of issues (that are important) not only to us but also our people," the

King said. "We've had a very constructive discussion on a number of issues," said Mr. Christopher. "We of course discussed the peace process and the import-

(Continued on page 5)

Ekeus begins talks in Iraq

NICOSIA (AP) — A U.N. official working to ensure that Iraq complies with ceasefire resolutions banning it from possessing weapons of mass destruction held talks Monday with Iraq's foreign minister and other officials in Baghdad. The Iraqi News Agency said Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission, met with Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Saad Al Sabah and other officials to discuss developments since Deputy Premier Tariq Aziz visited New York in March.

Israel wants PLO amnesty

CAIRO (AFP) — Israeli negotiators insisted here Monday that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) announce a general amnesty for all collaborators in exchange for the release of more Palestinian prisoners, an Israeli source said. The Palestinians are pressing for 3,400 prisoners to be freed, in addition to 5,000 whom both sides agreed would be released after the signing of an accord to launch self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Afula bus attack claims ninth victim

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli woman has died of her injuries almost three weeks after the suicide car-bomb attack in the northern town of Afula, raising the death toll to nine, hospital officials said Monday. Ahuva Cohen was seriously injured in the attack which was claimed by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in revenge for the February 25 Hebron massacre.

Hata faces crisis

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Social Democratic Party (SDP) announced Tuesday its decision to leave the coalition government of newly-elected Prime Minister Tomiichi Hatoyama following the sudden emergence of a rival bloc. "The SDP cannot remain a member of the coalition government and we cannot take part in the formation of a cabinet by the new government," SDP chairman Tomiichi Murayama said (see page 8).

Special group formed on Bosnia

LONDON (AFP) — Russia, the United States, the European Union and the United Nations have agreed to form a joint consultation group on the Bosnia crisis, Russian envoy Vitaly Churkin said Monday. The group's first meeting will be Tuesday, he said without specifying where. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said it would take place in London at the ambassador level.

Bombings cloud S. African elections

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — Suspected white extremists on Monday stepped up a bombing campaign, which has killed at least 19 people in two days, as South Africans prepared to go to the polls for landmark all-race elections from Tuesday.

A 100-kilogramme car-bomb exploded at a taxi rank in the Johannesburg satellite town of Germiston, killing at least 10 and injuring 36.

It followed a similar attack in central Johannesburg Sunday that left nine dead and nearly 100 wounded.

Six other blasts, four aimed at election offices and polling stations, were reported Monday in rural towns around the country, where white extremists opposed to the poll enjoy most support.

African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela condemned the latest wave of attacks as the work of "madmen."

The bombers, he said, are "madmen who are now slaughtering innocent people because they fear democracy." The perpetrators, he said, would be hunted down.

President Frederic de Klerk blamed the spate of bomb attacks on a "lunatic fringe," attempting to disrupt the elec-

(Continued on page 5)

U.N. rescues more injured from Gorazde

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The U.N. evacuated wounded by helicopter on Monday from battered Gorazde and deployed more peacekeepers along the front lines there as the Muslim enclave's Bosnian Serb besiegers pulled back tanks and artillery.

The U.N. Commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Michael Rose, said he believed the Serbs, threatened by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) with air strikes, would meet the alliance's Wednesday deadline to pull their heavy weapons from a 20-kilometres area around Gorazde.

"I am fairly confident they will. I believe they are actually withdrawing at the moment, we have seen many signs of that," he told BBC radio.

The first two helicopters out of Gorazde on Monday carried 15 patients and five people accompanying them to Sarajevo. Seven were on stretchers and the rest were walking wounded.

U.N. military spokesman Major Holloway said the helicopters were delayed for an hour by having to land at Sokolac for inspection by the Bosnian Serbs.

The lull in fighting prompted

Majali welcomes Israeli comments on settlements

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan on Monday welcomed as a "positive step" Israeli statements indicating readiness for making territorial compromise and dismantling the settlements in the occupied Arab territories in return for peace with the Arabs.

"I believe what (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin) said is positive... it is the first time he makes such a statement and it (means) an acceptance of the truth that peace cannot be achieved as long as the settlements exist in their current shape," Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali told reporters.

Restating Jordan's position that settlements are an obstacle to peace, Dr. Majali said the Hebron massacre was a major factor in "shaking the idea of building and keeping settlements."

Dr. Majali said Jordan was ready to hold the meetings of



Abdul Salam Majali

the Jordanian-Palestinian coordination committees, blaming the failure of these committees to meet on the Palestinian engagement with the autonomy talks in Egypt.

He said this engagement partly justifies the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) failure to hold the meetings of these committees but "does not justify it fully because a long time has passed (since the formation of com-

mittees)." He said, "our fear for the absence of coordination is that our brothers in the organisation do not have enough experience in certain issues and we are more experienced than them and could help them and avoid harm."

But coordination with Syria "is at its best," said Dr. Majali adding that Syria supports Jordan's demand for an end to the siege on Aqaba and the two countries along with other Arab partners will meet to coordinate before the resumption of the bilateral peace talks.

He said the Hebron massacre and the siege on Aqaba contributed to the halting of the peace talks until the emergence of positive signs about these issues.

Dr. Majali rejected accusations that his government lacked a strategy on the process or its media policy, saying Jordan was among the first countries to seek peace in the region.

Reiterating Jordan's com-

(Continued on page 5)

Review of W. Bankers has no political implications — Majali

AMMAN (J.T.) — The call by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on the government to re-examine procedures concerning West Bank residents living in the Kingdom has no political dimension, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said Monday.

Speaking at a meeting with the local and foreign media correspondents, Dr. Majali said the Regent's statement on Sunday referred to a "procedural matter" that applies exactly to the other border crossings in the Kingdom.

"The current pressure on the Jordan River Bridges calls for a lot of change to the present measures and to routine with a view to improving the situation," said Dr. Majali.

Prince Hassan has said at a meeting with the secretaries-general of the various minis-

tries that regulations issued in 1988 following Jordan's severance of legal and administrative ties with the West Bank should be reconsidered.

He called for updating and modernising the regulations to cope with the developments that have emerged since 1988.

He stressed the need to reconsider the criteria for residence of West Bankers in Jordan with the aim of facilitating and easing administrative procedures.

Dr. Majali said that any measures or instructions can be "no means please all the people nor can they cover all cases as every now and then we have a new problem that requires a different measure."

The government would be re-examining the instructions from time to time in order to handle the new questions. Hence this is purely a procedu-

(Continued on page 5)

ral matter aiming at facilitating measures for the incoming and outgoing visitors across the Jordan River bridges and to reduce the ever increasing pressure on the concerned authorities at the bridges who, he said, handle thousands of travellers' cases on a daily basis, he said.

Commenting on the issue, Interior Minister Salamah Hammad said Monday that the ministry was constantly revising regulations related to the residence of West Bankers in the Kingdom.

"The last time these regulations were revised was in September 1993 when all concerned authorities met and adopted appropriate measures to deal with the different cases," Mr. Hammad said.

"We facilitate the visits by

(Continued on page 5)

Israel, PLO study autonomy package

Economy pact may be delayed

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiators sought agreement here Monday on a draft document clearing the last hurdles to Palestinian self-rule, sources close to the talks said.

The document was a "package deal" covering security arrangements, the scope of Palestinian law in the self-rule areas of Jericho and Gaza and Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

An Arab diplomat close to the talks said it was "virtually established" that an overall accord to launch self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho would be signed next week.

The negotiators resumed talks in Cairo Sunday. Palestinian officials said it could be the last session before an accord was clinched.

An Israeli minister said meanwhile the economic issues stalling talks on implementation of Palestinian autonomy may be dealt with at a later stage to allow a quick agreement and changes on the ground.

Economics Minister Shimon Shetreet told Israel Radio that the cabinet's conclusion was that "to succeed (the talks) need to be completed shortly."

He added that a strategic decision was made "that if the security, judicial and political issues are completed it is definitely possible to leave the economic issues for a later stage."

Israeli media quoted Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as telling the cabinet that "if an

(Continued on page 5)

agreement is not achieved in two weeks — the whole thing will fail."

Reports have predicted that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat would meet to finalise an agreement initiating Palestinian self-rule in Jericho and Gaza next week.

But the daily Haaretz said Monday that the signing would likely be delayed due to Mr. Rabin's insistence that all issues be tied up beforehand.

Israel Finance Minister Avraham Shohat told Israel Television many issues remained unresolved in Paris talks.

If agreement is not reached before an autonomy accord is signed in Cairo, "the existing economic situation will more or less continue and in my view it will be very bad for the Palestinians," Mr. Shohat said.

Mr. Shohat did not exclude the possibility the delegations in Paris could match the pace in Cairo.

"But it means reaching many agreements within several days. The number of unresolved matters is not small and therefore I would say there is a chance but no guarantee."

Israel, Mr. Shohat said, had prepared contingency plans for self-rule without economic autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

"This means we will control imports, there will be no change in import regulations such as they wanted and we will in effect maintain an economic regimen very similar to the one existing now," he said.

(Continued on page 5)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Department of Antiquities announces the postponement of the formal opening of a conference entitled "Encounter of Museums, professionals of Arab countries' museums, civilisation and development" which was due to open today Tuesday 26.4.94 at 10 a.m. The opening ceremony will be at 5 p.m. on the same day. The conference will be opened under the patronage of

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent

at the conferences hall of the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman. Invited guests are requested to be present half an hour before the opening time.

Thank you

Mark on Your Calendar

Bani Hamida presents

"Artists Expressions in Wool"

Sunday, May 8 - Sunday, May 15
10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

at the Jordanian Construction Contractors Association Bldg. Tel 658695

Fateh and Hamas step up dialogue in Gaza Strip

OCCUPIED GAZA (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, have stepped up dialogue weeks before the PLO is due to come to power as a Palestinian self-rule authority in the Gaza Strip.

Leaders of the two biggest Palestinian groups, one of which has signed peace with the Jewish state and one of which seeks to destroy it, have held a series of meetings in Gaza in the last few days, officials from both sides said on Sunday.

Both sides described the publicly announced meetings, the latest of which was held on Saturday, as informal dialogues focusing on how to avoid inter-Palestinian bloodshed after self-rule begins in a few weeks' time.

But the mere fact that Fateh is meeting with a group which has killed 12 Israelis in suicide bomb attacks this month makes many Israelis nervous. Cabinet ministers said last week any sign Fateh was prepared to help Hamas guerrillas escape Israeli security forces could jeopardise the peace deal.

Rashid Abu Shbak, a leading Fateh official in Gaza, said Saturday's meeting, which lasted late into the night at a Gaza hotel, was an academic-style discussion and not political.

"It was no more than a seminar, not an official agreement," he told Reuters but added: "We're on our way to reaching a full agreement to avoid bloodshed."

Officers from the embryo Palestinian police attended the discussion alongside prominent Hamas personalities like Khaled Al Hindi, an aide to the movement's leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin.

Another Fateh official said the two groups were also meeting in the West Bank. The military wings of the two groups, the Fateh Hawks and the Qassam Brigades of Hamas, issued a joint statement on Friday saying they would both stop killing sus-

pected collaborators with Israel for a month.

Other Fateh leaders defended the peace agreement at a public debate in front of more than 1,000 students on Sunday at Gaza's Islamic University. Sufyan Abu Zeid and Diab Al Louh fielded tough questions from Islamists both in the 90-minute debate and afterwards at lunch with university staff.

Hamas supporters played down any suggestion the talks involved any agreement on political matters, describing them as attempts to establish friendly contacts.

"They dealt with matters like avoiding the spilling of blood that everyone agrees on. They have not dealt with political issues," said Ahmad Bahar, who runs an Islamic charitable society and was deported to Lebanon.

Sources close to Hamas also suggested Fateh was also initiating dialogue to prevent any armed escalation after a Hamas supporter was shot and killed by Fateh Hawks in a dispute in the southern town of Rafah last month.

Amnon Rubinstein, Israel's left-wing education minister, said a Fateh-Hamas agreement could be either a blessing or a curse depending on which one influenced the other more.

"It will be a blessing if the PLO is going to exert its influence to prevent terrorism in Israel. It will be a curse if it signals passive cooperation and tacit understanding Hamas can go on killing Israelis outside the Gaza Strip," he told reporters.

Hamas asked Fateh representatives to the Islamic University to address 2,000 students on the forthcoming Palestinian autonomy and the opposition.

"It really is the first time that Hamas has invited us, and what is more to this university to speak to their students," said Mr. Louh, a Fateh leader in Gaza.

"It's a good start to establish relations between the national and Islamic movements," he said after the Hawks and Al Kassam announced their

agreement Friday to end inter-ethnic fighting and to cooperate for autonomy.

"However, we do not want to talk about a honeymoon because that's for marriages and occasionally matrimony ends in divorce," he laughed.

Ala Al Nazi, a 22-year-old student linked to Hamas, agreed. "It's the first joint meeting. It was excellent and moving."

"It expresses the unity to which we aspire. We will hold more similar meetings and will maintain our relations with Fateh."

After warm applause for the arrival of three members of Fateh's high committee the debate quickly focussed on how the 9,000 Palestinian policemen will treat those like Hamas who have opposed the autonomy deal and the whole peace process.

The opposition fears victimisation, particularly by the 7,000 men of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), who will form the backbone of the force and are totally devoted to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Political science lecturer Atef Adwan, who was deported to southern Lebanon in 1992, questioned the impartiality of a police force recruited by the PLO.

"Generally in democratic countries, the police does not belong to any particular side. Will this be the case or will it be an extension of the Israeli police?" he asked.

Mr. Louh replied: "The Palestinian authority will be elected by all Palestinians and the policemen who are due to arrive are veteran soldiers who have given their lives to the Palestinian cause and I do not think they will become the oppressors."

"The police will be clean and impartial."

The Israeli government has made no mention of the agreement, after warning the PLO that if it reached an understanding with the fundamentalists which allowed Hamas to continue its attacks on Israelis then the autonomy deal would be off.

Leftists hurl bombs at six banks in Ankara

ISTANBUL (Agencies) — Leftists hurled explosives at six banks Sunday, the Anatolia news agency said. Damage was reported, but no injuries.

Molotov cocktails were used in three of the attacks, against branches of major private banks Yapi Kredi, Akbank and Pamukbank, the agency added.

The underground Turkish Workers and Peasants Communist Army, TIKKO, claimed responsibility for the attacks in telephone calls to newspapers. An anonymous caller said "the attacks were staged to celebrate TIKKO's 22nd anniversary."

Such attacks are not uncommon in Istanbul, Turkey's largest city with a population of 10 million. Illegal leftist, Kurdish separatist and radical groups are known to be active in the city.

1,000 killed in revolt
Troops have killed more than 1,000 separatist Kurdish guerrillas since the beginning of the year, the government said.

Interior Minister Nahit Metevci said in a statement that security forces killed 1,037 guerrillas since January. There was no mention of government casualties.

The guerrillas belong to the Kurdish Labour Party, the PKK, which has been fighting for autonomy in southeastern Turkey since 1984. More than 12,000 people have died in the unrest.

This year, the army has stepped up its operations against the guerrillas in southeastern Turkey and furthered a land and air operation against their bases in northern Iraq.

Mr. Metevci said 1,976 were captured this year and 88 had surrendered, according to a statement on television quoted by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

He said 79 guerrillas were killed and two were captured in operations in northern Iraq, where this month thousands of Turkish troops launched a cross-border operation to drive the PKK from the region.

Mr. Metevci added that about 4,500 militants had been "neutralised" by intelligence

work that had weakened the organisation.

Workers march
More than 20,000 union workers marched through the capital Sunday in protest of government austerity measures that include price hikes and layoffs.

The march — which included groups as politically diverse as leftist and Muslim fundamentalists — showed the broad-based opposition to the steps intended to turn around the economy.

It was the largest labour rally in Ankara in recent years. There were no reports of violence.

Some workers demanded a general strike and the government's resignation. One banner featured a drawing of Prime Minister Tansu Ciller putting a "for sale" sign on Turkey in sarcasm of her privatisation programme.

Ms. Ciller unveiled the austerity package earlier this month. Prices of products of state enterprises went up by 100 per cent.

EU to boost efforts to end Arab boycott of Israel

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The European Union (EU) is expected to reinforce its efforts to convince the Arab countries to drop their boycott of Israel, but it also aware that immediate success will be elusive on the primary side of the decades-old embargo on the Jewish state, diplomats said Monday.

The efforts are expected to focus on the secondary and tertiary aspects of the boycott related to companies with close links with Israel and firms that deal with blacklisted firms to escape being blacklisted themselves.

The diplomats said the foreign ministers of the 12-nation EU decided in a meeting held in Brussels last week to intensify lobbying the Arab states individually and collectively to end the boycott and to ask all EU countries to enforce a regulation that makes exporters complying with the boycott requirements liable for prosecution.

Alexandra Papanicolaou, first secretary at the embassy of Greece, which holds the rotating presidency of the EU, would only say that the ministers "decided to pursue efforts to emphasise to the Arab states to drop their economic boycott of Israel."

Without going into details, Ms. Papanicolaou noted that a decision adopted by the European Community (EC), the precursor of the EU, "makes it illegal" for exporters from member countries to comply with the boycott requirements by importers.

These include certificates of origin stating that no Israeli component has gone into producing the goods covered under the export and that the ship carrying the goods is not Israeli-owned and will not be docking at an Israeli port on its voyage from the point of origin to destination.

Some of the EU countries, notably Germany, France and Britain, have maintained strict enforcement of regulations which forbid exporters from providing these documents while the others have only acted when specific cases have been brought to the attention of their governments with demands for action, mostly raised by pro-Israeli groups supported by Israeli intelligence information.

"The decision (taken in Brussels) means that individual EU members will be asked to tighten their regulations barring compliance with the boycott requirements and also lobbying individual Arab governments to drop the secondary and tertiary boycotts," said a senior diplomat from a EU member country.

The diplomat, who insisted on anonymity, emphasised that the "move does not imply a new decision" by the EU. "It is only the reaffirmation of a decision and call for the enforcement of that decision," said the diplomat. "It may involve, in some countries, an increase in penalties for companies found complying with the requirements of the boycott."

"Most community members are aware of the illogic in asking the Arab states to drop the primary boycott (which bars direct trade with Israel) at this point when fundamental conflicts are not resolved,"

said the diplomat. "But they also believe that trade boycotts and embargos do not bode well to create understanding and instill mutual confidence among the parties involved," added the diplomat.

The Brussels decision was coupled with an undertaking to monitor continued Israeli settlement of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and to provide around \$11 million to help equip and support the Palestinian police force which will deploy in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho under the Sept. 13 deal signed between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel.

The money will come from 500 million European currency units (around \$560 million) allotted by the EU to help support Palestinian autonomy envisaged under the Israel-PLO accord.

In addition, the EU will also work closely with the Palestinians and Israelis to ensure the implementation of the accord, which calls for elections for a self-rule authority not later than July, a deadline unlikely to be met, given the missed dates for Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

"The EU is anxious to ensure that democracy and respect for human rights will be among the pillars of the self-rule authority," said another senior European diplomat. As such, said the diplomat, the EU will work closely with all non-governmental organisations and human rights groups in the occupied territories and outside on a political level.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

One third of Soviet emigres are not Jews

TEL AVIV (AFP) — One third of immigrants from the former Soviet Union who settled in Israel over the past five years are not Jews, Israeli Television reported Sunday. It said years ago not 150,000 out of some 500,000 arrivals from the former Soviet Union were gentiles and 20,000 more non-Jewish spouses of Jews were due to be admitted this year. Jewish Television said the chief rabbinate was delaying Israeli Television said the chief rabbinate was delaying conversions to Judaism by spouses. One thousand aspiring converts were accepted in 1993 in courses organised by the rabbinate, but only a quarter of the candidates were finally accepted into the Jewish faith. More than 350 other immigrants, who have passed all the ultra-orthodox rabbinical waiting for months to go before the ultra-orthodox rabbinical court which has the final word on conversions. The freedom of conscience and hinders mass immigration. Also "law of return" which allows any Jew to settle in Israel, also applies to non-Jewish spouses even if they do not intend to convert to Judaism. If the wife is not Jewish, the offspring are not considered to be Jews since Judaism only regards children of a Jewish mother as Jews.

Drugs seized in northeastern Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran said Sunday its forces have seized 110 kilograms of narcotics and arrested 23 suspected dealers in a haul in the northeastern province of Khorasan. The Islamic Republic News Agency said the operation was carried out over the past few days, but gave no other details. Thousands of Iranians have been arrested in a nationwide campaign to check drug abuse and smuggling that began in 1988. Many people have been executed under a 1988 law that introduced the death penalty for drug-related offenses.

Mali president begins visit to Syria

DAMASCUS (AP) — Mali President Alpha Omar Konare arrived Sunday on a two-day visit to promote bilateral relations. President Hafez Al Assad met his guest at the airport and they drove straight to the presidential palace for a first round of talks, the official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) said. Their talks were also expected to focus on ways to revive the Non-Aligned Movement, which has been largely inactive since the collapse of the Soviet empire.

Ethiopia appeals to Iran for food aid

NICOSIA (R) — Drought-hit Ethiopia on Sunday appealed to Iran for urgent relief aid to help some 6.7 million Ethiopians threatened with starvation, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported. IRNA said the head of the Ethiopian Red Cross, Jamal Abdul Qader handed Iran's ambassador in Addis Ababa a letter to the Iranian Red Crescent asking for help. It said Mr. Abdul Qader "feared the possible spread of epidemics in his country as a result of the drought and said Western governments have been giving more promises to alleviate the worsening situation of the Ethiopian people." Ethiopia says 6.7 million of its people needed food aid and has criticised the slow response to its appeals for help.

Armenians of Iran hold low-key ceremony

TEHRAN (AFP) — Thousands of Iranian Armenians gathered in church here Sunday to mark the anniversary of the 1915 Armenian genocide in Ottoman Turkey, keeping the event low-key because of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. For the second year running, the authorities did not allow a public demonstration. Up until 1992, the Armenian community took to the streets of Tehran on the anniversary. Armenian leaders said the authorities wanted to keep the commemoration low-key to avoid tension as fighting rages between Azeris and Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, in neighbouring Azerbaijan. Around 250,000 Armenians live in Iran, along with 10 million Azeris who make up the country's largest minority. Armenians, backed by historians, say that more than one million of their compatriots were massacred during World War I or perished in deportation marches from eastern Anatolia through the Syrian desert. Turkey disputes the charge of genocide, arguing there were deaths on both sides, and says the Ottoman Armenians sided with the enemy Russia.

Iran calls for Muslims to provide arms to Bosnians

TEHRAN (AP) — The president of the Iranian parliament called Sunday for Muslim countries to act in defence of Muslims in Bosnia and supply them with arms, the official news agency IRNA said. Ali Akbar Nategh-Nouri, who was speaking at the opening of parliament, charged that the Bosnian Serbs were getting support from the United Nations and Western powers and Muslim countries should ignore the U.N. imposed arms embargo. "Given that one cannot count on an application of U.N. resolutions. Muslim countries should lift the arms embargo against Bosnia to allow the Muslims of that country to defend themselves," he said. He added that he had recently spoken to Pakistani and Malaysian officials, who were not identified, reaching a consensus on "the incapability of the United Nations to end Serb aggression."

Canadian trade minister in Kuwait

KUWAIT (AP) — Canadian International Trade Minister Roy MacLaren arrived in Kuwait Sunday on a brief visit aimed at improving commercial cooperation between the two countries. The commercial officer at the Canadian embassy said Mr. MacLaren was scheduled to meet with the defence, communications, oil and commerce and industry ministers before he leaves for Saudi Arabia. The officer, Barakat Bou Farhat, would not elaborate on the topics Mr. MacLaren would discuss with his hosts. But the state-run Kuwait News Agency said the Canadians were interested in building oil gathering centres, exporting drilling and refining equipment and undertaking telecommunications projects. Business opportunities for foreign partners are expected to increase dramatically when the government announces concrete steps toward privatisation of public services.

Saudi police arrest five activists — rights group

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Saudi police arrested five political rights activists in the northern town of Hail at the weekend, a London-based Saudi human rights group said Monday.

The Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR) said the five teachers and Muslim clerics supported its calls for political reforms in the kingdom, which has no parties and is governed according to Islamic principles.

A statement from the committee sent to AFP said police also arrested the son of Mohammad Al Masari, one of the group's founders, on Saturday.

Anwar Mohammad Al Masari, 19, was arrested "to put pressure on his father," who left Saudi Arabia to relaunch the committee in London, the committee said.

His father, a physics professor at Riyadh University, was arrested in May 1993 with a group of other Saudi intellectuals only days after the group was set up.

He was held for five months without charge, said the group, which is banned in Saudi Arabia and is pressing for freedom of speech and association.

"Anwar, who is 19 years old and is in the final year of high school, and previously been interrogated and persecuted four times during the period of

his father's disappearance," the group said in a statement. "It is believed that this recent measure is aimed at intimidating professor Al Masari."

The group also said Saudi security agents "stormed and thoroughly searched the residence of 26-year-old Rashid Mohammad Kamal, professor Al Masari's brother-in-law, in Jeddah on Sunday 24 April."

It said Mr. Kamal and his mother had been arrested and taken to an undisclosed location.

The CDLR, set up in May 1993 by ultra-conservative Saudi religious figures, was declared illegal by Saudi religious leaders who argued that existing Islamic law and adequate provisions to defend citizens' rights.

On Saturday, Arab diplomats in Riyadh said Gulf Arab states had reservations about a U.S. document calling on them to encourage pluralism and democracy as the basis of future relations in the Middle East.

The document, presented to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in February, said Washington wanted to see participants in the multilateral Middle East peace talks "encourage individual and collective freedoms and pursue democracy and pluralism."

It will be warm and sunny with clouds appearing at different altitudes and winds northwesterly moderate, in Arabia, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifeth, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

TERMINALS
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 623543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 623528
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

PRAYER TIMES
04:27 Fajr
05:51 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:34 Dhuhr
16:12 'Asr
19:15 Maghrib
20:39 'Isha

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Abbas Hakim 885446
Dr. Fayez Dabbas 799135
Dr. Yousef Rashid 896301
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 826024
Fires pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778334
Al Asana pharmacy 670355
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 626730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shawarrah pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 626672
Najib pharmacy 847632

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 83021
Public Security Department 605800
Hotel Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

DISCOUNTS
Jordan Valley 5 / 24
Jordan Valley 16 / 28

YESTERDAY'S HIGH TEMPERATURES: Amman 20, Aqaba 28. Humidity readings: Amman 34 per cent, Aqaba 25 per cent.

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THE CULTURAL ROLE: Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday attends a meeting at the Ministry of Culture's new premises on Wasiti Teli Street. Dr. Majali said the ministry can play a greater role through drawing up cultural policies and supervising their implementation. The prime minister called on the culture ministry to stimulate the work of the National Library, particularly in cultural activities, and that of public libraries in general.

Majali confirms move to help bail out RJ

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali confirmed on Monday that the government had decided to increase the capital of Royal Jordanian (RJ) and help the national carrier reschedule part of its domestic debts.

Dr. Majali, addressing a press conference at the Prime Ministry, said the guaranteed move to settle \$49 million (about JD 35 million) of RJ's external debts by the government and add that amount to the capital of the airline was part of a move towards eventual privatisation of the airline.

With the infusion, the capital of the airline will rise to JD 57 million — part of the way towards an eventual capital of about JD 70 million, a figure recommended by international experts as the minimum acceptable capital of an airline the size of RJ.

The prime minister, who is known to have taken a personal interest in closely following up the affairs of the airline — he makes unscheduled appearances at RJ board meetings — said the capital boost comes in imple-

mentation of a decision taken in 1989 to help RJ overcome its problems caused by heavy debts accumulated over the years.

The first stage in the plan entails converting RJ into a wholly government entity before offering shares to the private sector, he said, in an indirect reference to a recommendation made by international consultants Arthur Anderson after a study conducted in 1992.

Another consultancy firm, KPMG Peat of London, is conducting a closer study and assessment of the airline under the supervision of a Jordanian technical committee. The study is expected to recommend the best mechanism for the gradual transformation of the airline into a private-sector entity with majority Jordanian control.

Further moves by the government to streamline the affairs of the airline, Dr. Majali said, will depend on the outcome of the KPMG study and its recommendations.

Figures released in January put the total debts of the carrier at JD579 million against assets worth JD 534 million. The bulk of the debts



Abdul Salam Majali

— around JD 370 million — are external, mostly outstanding lease payments of Airbus aircraft the airline purchased in the late 60s. Year-end figures put the outstanding lease payments at JD 301 million.

Earlier this month, RJ Vice-President Majdi Sabri underlined the rising per-

formance of the airline, in terms of passenger and cargo traffic and gross earnings.

According to Dr. Sabri, the gross earnings of RJ in the first quarter of this year rose by 16.5 per cent to JD 81 million over the corresponding period of 1993. Passenger traffic went up by 18.9 per cent and flight occupancy rates rose from 56.7 per cent to 64 per cent, he said.

In the immediate short-term, RJ could be expected to maintain a high performance for the rest of the year, given the usual rise in passenger traffic during the Hajj season and expatriates coming home for the summer vacation.

It is known that RJ is a lucrative airline, particularly with its connections between North America and Europe with Asia and the Far East. But the cost of debt servicing weighed it down heavily, leaving it to make do with many essential changes with the scarce funds available.

The study conducted by Arthur Anderson in 1992 recommended that the capital of the airline be raised to at least \$100 million as the first step. It proposed that the

local creditors of RJ be given proportionate equity for a period of two years during which foreign investors, including the external creditors, are given an equity option.

The overriding factor in any such consideration, officials say, is that at no point will the government consider any move that might let go of Jordanian controlling interest in the airline. Effectively, that means the government itself and state-run agencies hang on to a minimum of 51 per cent of the shares until such time the Kingdom's private sector steps into take over.

Transport Minister Aqel Halasa told Parliament in January Royal Jordanian has not only served as the Kingdom's proud flag-carrier but also as an essential component in the overall state structure of Jordan. In addition to offering employment to nearly 5,000 Jordanians, the airline also uses the services and products of hundreds of local industries and businesses.

Financial considerations should not be the only factor that governs any decision on the future of the airline, Mr. Halasa emphasised.

Labourers union supports sales tax

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The controversial sales tax draft law has the "full support" of the Jordanian Labourers Federation Union (JLFU) because it protects limited income people, according to JLFU Secretary General Khaled Shraim.

Observers believe that the draft legislation, the first item on the Lower House of Parliament agenda of its extraordinary session, is expected to be endorsed by the House after extended and heated debates by deputies who are divided into three categories: those who support the draft legislation as presented by the government, others who think it is necessary for Jordan's economic reform but believe it needs amending and those who oppose the draft legislation and argue that it will add to citizens' financial burden, especially

limited income people.

The JLFU's position vis-à-vis the draft law has been of interest to many observers as labourers are representative of the lower income citizens in the country.

But speculation over the union's stand came to an end Sunday when the JLFU issued a press release saying that it supports the draft legislation.

"After carefully studying the list of goods and services on which the tax will be imposed, the JLFU's Executive Committee decided that labourers will not be affected by the lists attached to the draft law," Mr. Shraim told the Jordan Times Monday.

Mr. Shraim said the union had also sent letters to lawmakers, Minister of Finance Sami Gammo, and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali informing them of the union's decision.

He said many people oppose the JLFU's support

for the draft legislation, but that such opposition would not alter the union's stand because, he added, each group is entitled to its own opinion.

Meanwhile, Sunday's meeting of the House was fuelled with confrontations between lawmakers and the government over controversial articles of the draft law, especially Article 6 which was described as the most important article of the draft legislation. Article 6 was approved by 32 out of 61 deputies who voted for the Financial Committee's recommendation to cut down the proposed tax from 10 to 7 per cent, which, according to Mr. Gammo, no longer serves the draft law's major role as an economic reform measure.

More disputes are expected in today's House meeting, which will resume debates on the 51-article draft legislation.

Jordan, Pakistan agree to expand trade relations

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Pakistan Monday agreed on expanding cooperation in trade and on matters related to training workers, the exchange of technical know-how and joint ventures.

Agreement was concluded following three days of talks conducted through the joint Jordanian-Pakistani Economic Committee at the Ministry of Planning during which a wide range of topics related to trade and economic cooperation was reviewed.

The Jordanian side presented the Pakistani team with a list of national products that could be exported to Pakistani markets including medicines, paints, gas ranges, gas heaters, perambulators, refrigerators and electrical switches, according to a statement following the signing of minutes of deliberations.

"The statement said the two sides agreed to organise trade exhibitions in the two countries to promote the sale of national

products and set up a joint committee to follow up on this matter.

The two sides also agreed to speed up work on the implementation of two joint ventures, one for the manufacture of phosphate-based fertilisers in Pakistan and a phosphoric acid project in Jordan.

The minutes provided for training of Jordanian personnel in the manufacture of pumps manual equipment and textile machines in Pakistan. Jordan is to benefit from Pakistan's expertise in agriculture, and the two sides will cooperate in the leather, textile auto spare parts and garment industries, probably through joint ventures by the private sectors.

According to the statement, the committee decided on measures that would pave the way for future cooperation in communications, health, science and technology, culture and civil aviation.

The statement added that



The secretary general of the Ministry of Planning, Safwan Toukan (right), and the under-secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Pakistan, Afthab Ahmad Khan Monday sign minutes of a trade cooperation agreement in Amman (Petra photo)

Jordan currently exports phosphate and fertilisers to Pakistan and imports Pakistani medical equipment and

textile products among others. The minutes were signed by Safwan Toukan, the Ministry of Planning Secretary General

and Afthab Ahmad Khan, under-secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Pakistan.

Regional cooperation is a must in water, agriculture fields — Sqour

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Regional cooperation is no longer a choice, and in the area of water and agriculture, it is a must for this region to progress and develop given the international political and economic variables, said Minister of Social Development Mohammad Sqour.

Addressing the opening session of a workshop on agricultural extension services in promoting the proper use of irrigation water and agro-chemicals at the farm level, Sqour said states do not exist in isolation and this has been Jordan's call and practice at the Arab and international levels.

According to Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Farhan the workshop is timely because local and regional and international events point to the importance of the proper use of natural agricultural resources, irrigation water and modern agricultural production inputs, especially agro-chemicals.

"This realisation became stronger after it became appa-

rent that the improper use of natural resources and agro-chemicals, poses a threat to the continuity of agricultural production and the safety of humans and environment, over and above its direct impact on the farmers themselves," Mr. Farhan said.

Mr. Farhan voiced concern over several indicators on natural resources and modern production inputs, saying that they are being used improperly for reasons that differ between countries. Some countries, he added, lack the appropriate funds to conduct parallel technological research and they become incapable of generating the needed technology to generate the technical, economic and ecological viability.

Mr. Farhan further said that proper use of irrigation water and agro-chemicals at the farm level represents a formidable task, adding that the responsibility of implementing this task lies on the agricultural extension institution in each country of the region.

He called on public and semi-public institutions, popular organisations, industrial and commercial establishments

in private sector especially the ones that manufacture and import agro-chemicals and irrigation systems to promote the proper uses of these inputs.

Antonio Kharat, representing Food and Agriculture Organisation said "today, agricultural sustainability is a topic of major concern to all nations." He said "the proper use of irrigation water and agro-chemicals are two major elements that would insure sustainability."

Mr. Kharat said the workshop will examine the current structures and functions of the systems involved in this process to reach practical recommendations on the future methodologies and strategies best suited to achieve agricultural sustainability, with emphasis on human resources responsible for its implementation, and finally identifying the "natural agricultural resources that deserve quick attention."

The four-day workshop is co-sponsored by the Regional Centre on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development for the Near East (CARDNE) and the FAO.



Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz Monday presides over a meeting with a visiting Chinese parliamentary delegation headed by Wang Chao Chu (Petra photo)

Visiting parliamentarian to tell Beijing of consequences of blockade on Aqaba

AMMAN (Petra) — The head of a visiting Chinese parliamentary delegation Monday said he would convey to the Chinese government the negative consequences to the Jordanian economy caused by the blockade on the port of Aqaba and the extent of suffering it has inflicted on the Jordanian people.

Wang Chao Chu said that the Chinese people deeply sympathise with the Jordanian people in this matter and hope to see a speedy solution to the problem.

Mr. Chu, who was speaking at a meeting with Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taher Masri, heard from the speaker about Jordan's persistent complaints against the harassment of international shipping and the delays in the import-export operations resulting from the interception of Aqaba-bound vessels.

Working in coordination with third world countries, China is striving to set up an international order in which the interests of all nations would be treated on equal

footing, said Mr. Chu.

Referring to the Middle East situation, Mr. Chu said there can be no settlement except through peaceful negotiations which could ensure the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in conformity with U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Masri had said Jordanian parliamentary delegations would be sent to various nations including China to present the Aqaba siege case and demand a lifting of the blockade which, he said, came as a result of regional conflicts in which Jordan was never involved.

With regard to the Middle East, Mr. Masri said Jordan seeks a settlement that would ensure stability for the whole Arab nation, and therefore the Kingdom is placing all its weight behind the peace efforts.

Discussion at the meeting which was attended by the Chinese delegation members and house deputies covered topics of concern to third world

nations and the role which China could play in world affairs through its permanent membership on the U.N. Security Council.

Mr. Chu later Monday met Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz who pledged that Jordan would offer all possible facilities in order to boost bilateral cooperation and increase investments.

Dr. Fariz said Jordan hopes that the joint Jordanian-Chinese Economic Committee which is due shortly to hold a meeting in Amman would help the two countries exchange expertise and promote trade and economic relations.

In reviewing the developments in Jordanian-Chinese trade, Dr. Fariz said Jordan has been importing Chinese products at the rate of JD50 million and exporting only JD16 million worth of Jordanian goods to Chinese markets annually.

He said the Kingdom was hoping to increase its phosphate and potash exports to Chinese markets.

Family feud results in killing of neighbour

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 28-year-old Wadi Mousa man Sunday was killed by his neighbours after he allegedly interfered to stop a fight between two families, a Civil Defence Department (CDD) report said.

Mahmoud H.F. (24), who, according to police, confessed to killing his neighbour Ayed M.F. (28), told police that he had had an argument with his wife, and she left home to seek refuge at her family's house. He said he followed her there and started arguing with her two brothers. A neighbour heard them shouting and came to check the matter, a CDD official told the Jordan

Times. The suspect said when the argument became heated with his brothers-in-law they started fist fighting and the neighbour participated in the fight. Mahmood drew a gun and fired several times at the three men.

According to the report, the neighbour died instantly. The two brothers, Abdul Nour M.M. (30) and Ibrahim M.M. (25), were both listed in critical condition.

The report said the suspect also suffered minor injuries and was listed in fair condition.

According to the CDD official, the suspect was being held by police for further investigation. Police declined comment on the incident.



CREATIVE FLAIR: Iraqi designer Hana Sadeq Beraoud wears one of her own creations which will be shown in a fashion show of her 1994 collection including silver accessories at Amman's Philadelphia Hotel Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

NMC tops up its quartet festival with Austrian Mozarteum Quartet

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The First Quartet Festival organised by the National Music Conservatory (NMC) — Noor Al Hussein Foundation month will reach its climax on April 26 and 27 when the celebrated Austrian Mozarteum Quartet of Salzburg performs at two dinner concerts at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel.

Professor Karlheinz Franke — 1st violin, Mr. Nils Silka — 2nd violin, Dr. Heinz Kraschl — viola and Professor Heinrich Aminger — cello are neither amateurs nor beginners. With an impressive record exceeding 3,000 concerts and broadcasts, several discs released and numerous parti-

cipations in music festivals around the globe, the Mozarteum Quartet brings the best of Austria to Jordan.

The quartet will play works by Beethoven, Haydn, Schubert and, it goes without saying, Mozart. The programme will, however, be different each night.

Listening to a CD recording of the Mozarteum playing three of Mozart's "Haydn quartets" one is irresistibly taken to a world of superior musicianship.

The four artists show a sense of perfect balance of tempo, timbre and synchronism — qualities that come only with years of experience.

Talking to the Jordan Times about the event, Dr.

Stigebauer, the Austrian ambassador to Jordan, declared he considered the cultural relations between countries to be at least as important as the political and economic ones.

Musicians from Austria will regularly come to Jordan from now on he affirmed. Future presentations may also include non-classical, more "exotic" music.

The Mozarteum Quartet performances are organised by the NMC in cooperation with the Austrian embassy, Hotel Inter-Continental, Austrian Airways, the Austrian National Tourist Office and the SBM Company.

The proceeds of the events will go to the NMC scholarship fund.

THE AMERICAN EMBASSY
in Amman, Jordan, has the sad duty to announce the death on April 22, 1994, of former President of the United States
RICHARD MILHOUS NIXON

The embassy will open a condolence book for signature in the USIS lobby at the embassy, April 25-28, 1994, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. May God rest the soul of the departed and grant comfort to his family

Jordan Times

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The View from Fourth Circle

Finally, pragmatism triumphs over self-righteousness

By Rami G. Khouri

Seven months after the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles in September, the negotiations for the interim period of self-government in Palestine are nearly complete and within a few weeks the implementation of the accord will start. Three important developments in the last week strengthen my belief that the process now under way will ultimately succeed: the participation of an Israeli delegation in the multilateral water talks in Oman; the statements by the Israeli prime minister and the agriculture and economics minister to the effect that Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian and Syrian lands will eventually be dismantled; and the statements by Hamas officials that their organisation will make peace with Israel within its pre-1967 borders, and that Hamas wishes to participate in the self-government arrangement in Palestine in the five-year interim period before the final status of the occupied territories is agreed upon.

All three of these developments are important because they symbolise the pragmatic, realistic and conciliatory trend that must dominate the minds of all in the region if we are to make the peace process work and to lay the groundwork for a more stable and peaceful region. They symbolise, in essence, the triumph of the politics of inclusion over the mindset of selfish self-righteousness. The Arabs, Israel and the leading Palestinian group opposed to the Arafat-dominated PLO have opted to work within a political context that recognises the reality and the rights of those they have always adamantly opposed and fought. This is good news for those in this region who value pragmatism over diplomatic rigidity and who place a greater value on realism than on ideological purity.

The Arabs effectively said in Muscat that an Israeli state that ends its occupation of Arab lands and lives alongside a self-determinant Palestinian state will be accepted in the region — which is Israel's greatest wish. The Israelis effectively said that they recognise the incompatibility between occupation and peace, which is the Palestinians' and the Arabs' greatest wish. Hamas effectively said that it recognises the futility of remaining as a marginalised and negative voice of maximalism and rejection at a time when everyone else in the region is moving towards compromise and coexistence — which is the greatest wish of all those Arabs and Israelis who look forward to a future Middle East based on political pluralism and participatory governance.

Yasser Arafat, his Fateh group and their political supporters in the Palestinian diaspora have had a rough time recently and have suffered a great deal of opposition and ridicule. This will change quickly, I believe, in the coming weeks, when the Israelis start to withdraw from Gaza and Jericho, the

Palestinian self-governing authority starts to materialise and to wield real power and international financial aid and private Arab investments start to flow into Palestine. I predict that Arafat will regain much of his support when the self-governing arrangements come to life in May and that the dubious scepticism that now dominates the Palestinian and Arab national psyches will be replaced by an energetic determination to turn Palestinian self-determination into the core phase of Palestinian self-government and sovereignty.

The Israeli ministers' statements about ultimately dismantling settlements are extraordinarily important. It is no surprise, however, that they have been greeted with yet more Arab scepticism and doubt, for the Arab psyche remains distorted by the after-shocks of many decades of failure in the battle against Zionism and the state of Israel. It is time to snap out of this historical haze and to recognise the real movement that is taking place in the minds of the Israelis, and in ours.

The Israeli ministers' statements come in the wake of repeated requests by an increasing number of Israeli settlers for Israeli government financial assistance to allow them to move out of the settlements and to relocate within Israel's 1967 borders. That this should be happening even before the peace accord is implemented strikes me as a rather profound statement of political fact and a positive harbinger of things to come. Clearly, there is no future for the settlements, in their present status, under Palestinian sovereignty — and there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that Palestinian sovereignty is what we will see materialise in the years to the end of this decade.

Instead of dampening the impact of the Israeli ministers' statements, the Arab World should respond to them with a challenge and a promise: the challenge for Israel to translate its words into deeds and the promise that the Arabs will live alongside Israel and accept it as a state in our region if and when Israel affirms its willingness to coexist with Palestinian sovereignty and to implement all relevant United Nations resolutions on the Palestine question.

In this context, Hamas' sudden declaration about its willingness to coexist with an Israeli state in its pre-1967 borders are highly significant. In recent years, Hamas and other Islamist groups have taken over from the Palestinian leftist/nationalist groups the mantle of headline rejection of negotiating or coexisting with Israel. But Hamas, like Israel, sees the writing on the wall. It recognises, and now admits, that the present power configuration in the Middle East is not tenable for long. Israel recognises that its power and subjugation of Arab rights cannot continue forever, for several

reasons: Israel's heavy and vulnerable dependence on external support, the moral and psychological price that Israel pays for its continued occupation of others and the determination of the Arabs to right the wrongs of recent history.

At the same time, Hamas and its Islamist allies cannot expect to retain their popularity or their political credibility solely on the basis of their idealism, rejectionism and emotional sloganeering. The recent attempt by Hamas and other Islamists to join forces with the Palestinian lefties in opposing the PLO-Israeli peace plan has been intriguing, but largely ineffective — mainly because it perpetuates the rejectionist maximalism of the past, runs against the grain of the Middle Eastern pragmatism that defines the present and seems grievously irrelevant to the forces of conciliation and coexistence that promise to drive the future of this region.

It is no surprise, therefore, that within the same week Hamas should not only state its willingness in principle to coexist with an Israeli state that stays within its pre-1967 borders, but should also express its desire to engage in peaceful political battle and power-sharing in the new Palestine that will soon start to emerge. Hamas — has obviously learned the lessons of the Lebanese rightists — the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and Inkatha in South Africa: if you play hard to get and stay out of the political process that the national majority has agreed upon, you are likely to be relegated to the humiliating historical footnotes of self-destructive political irrelevance.

Most Arab feel that the PLO and the Arab governments are making too many concessions to Israel and getting little in return. I would suggest that this is incorrect and that, in fact, we are starting to see the Israelis making the big concessions that we have long demanded of them. The process has required much time, but it is finally under way. For the Israelis required much time, but it is finally under way. For the Israelis required much time, but it is finally under way. For the Israelis required much time, but it is finally under way.

It is time now for Arabs and Israelis alike to cease decrying the concessions that each makes to the other as signs of weakness and instead of focus on the mutual gains that both sides are making. For the first time in nearly a century of Arab-Israeli confrontation, we may have the opportunity to stop talking about winners and losers and instead to speak of collective victories, mutual gains and the simultaneous affirmation of several contiguous national identities.

United we stand

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan's call Sunday for reassessing regulations issued in the wake of the 1988 decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank in order to facilitate the handling of issues pertaining to West Bankers in Jordan is a welcome development. Ever since the 1988 decision, confusion marked some of the dealing with the Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and West Bankers who moved to Jordan after the 1967 war. The problem was compounded by the fact that these people had Jordanian nationality and carried valid Jordanian passports that entitled them to equal treatment as Jordanian citizens; many of them have children born in Jordan and studying in Jordanian schools. The sudden change of those people's legal status caused hardships, both personal and economic.

The problem appears to still affect so many people five years after the 1988 decision. The 1988 step was political, intended to give Palestinians an opportunity to represent themselves in their quest to regain their national rights.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali yesterday sought to quell any misconceptions as to the new directives by stressing that the reexamination of the procedures had no "political dimensions" and was only intended to improve the current facilities extended to the Palestinians. Latest developments, especially those related to the impending Palestinian self-rule and to the movement of future Palestinian officials in and out of the West Bank and border crossing at the bridges, require an updating of the existing regulations pertaining to our Palestinian brethren.

One overriding factor must be on the minds of all Jordanian officials. Whatever the political reasons for the 1988 decision, it is neither possible nor desirable to separate the two peoples that aspire for a united future. While asserting the Palestinian identity today, Jordanians and Palestinians are keen on keeping the seeds of a united future in place.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily criticised the media for misinterpreting or distorting statements by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who never said he would end the settlements in the event of peace. Mr. Rabin never said that he would give back Arab lands free of any settlement but rather would remove some settlements for the sake of achieving peace with Syria and the Palestinians, said Tareq Masarweh. The writer said Mr. Rabin never said his government would fully implement U.N. Security Council resolutions, and this has to be taken into consideration by the Arab parties involved in the peace process. What Mr. Rabin said was that Israel can never accept the idea of dismantling the Jewish settlements as it did in Sinai as a price it has to pay for peace, according to the writer. Those who put words in Mr. Rabin's mouth were naive people who could not absorb Mr. Rabin's words and realise his real intentions, added Mr. Masarweh. Even with regard to the Syrian Golan, he said, Mr. Rabin has said that some of the settlements could be removed but never did he say that the whole area would be cleared of the Israeli settlers. According to the writer, Mr. Rabin has said Israel would never order any of its citizens to leave his land for security reasons.

ANOTHER COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily focused attention on Mr. Rabin's visit to Moscow stressing that the Israeli prime minister's statement claiming that it was intended to ensure Washington-Moscow coordination in the peace process was a mere deception. Mr. Rabin is visiting Moscow in order to help create a Zionist lobby inside the Kremlin that would prevent any Arab influence on the Russian leaders and ensure no cooperation between Moscow and the future autonomy rule government in Palestine, said Mahmoud Rimawi. He said that even though Moscow is known to be secure within the orbit of American influence, Mr. Rabin insists on pursuing his attempt to secure full subjugation by Moscow to the U.S.-Zionist will.

M. KAHIL



Resistance to the U.S. unite Asians

By Elaine Kurtenbach
The Associated Press

TOKYO — Just five months ago, President Bill Clinton stood beside Asian leaders in Seattle and proclaimed a "new Pacific community."

But the reality is a growing series of spats between the United States and Asian countries that are souring relations nearly everywhere.

From Bombay to Beijing, Asians chafe under U.S. pressure on trade and human rights. Asian nations, long at odds with each other because of the cold war and historical rivalries, gradually are finding they have something in common: resistance to the American agenda for Asia.

"There is a near-universal unhappiness with the U.S. policy presentation," said Charles Morrison, an Asia specialist at the East-West Centre in Honolulu.

In contrast with the ascendancy of China and Japan, the higher profile taken by the United States in Asia recently has tended to undermine American influence rather than reinforce it.

Most governments, aside from Communist North Korea, still strongly favour the U.S. military presence in East Asia. The welcome mat also is out for American business, and U.S. culture is ever-popular with young Asians, if not their elders.

But U.S. attempts to use trade policy to influence such issues as labour standards and tolerance of political dissent have antagonised practically every nation in the area. During his election campaign, Mr. Clinton accused then-president George Bush of supplanting universal ideals of freedom and democracy with pragmatism.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher and other Clinton administration officials now contend that closer economic ties with Asia, which takes nearly two-thirds of all

U.S. exports, require broad agreement on such issues as human rights.

Winston Lord, U.S. assistant secretary of state, summarised that position in his confirmation hearings a year ago:

"Open societies do not attack one another. They make better trading partners. They press for environmental reform. They do not practice terrorism. They do not produce refugees. To be sure, areas of Asia lag behind the march of history."

To Asians, such comments suggest that Washington does not view them as equals. "This holier-than-thou attitude rubs most Asian societies the wrong way," said Bob Broadfoot, head of the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy in Hong Kong.

He cited such tactics as chastising China on human rights and Japan for its trade surplus, criticising Singapore's judicial system over the flogging sentence for an American youth and attacking Indonesian labour policies.

While North Korea remains repressive, the Communist regimes in China and Vietnam have at least offered their citizens more economic freedom. In the rest of Southeast and East Asia, growing affluence has brought unprecedented freedoms, political as well as economic.

Asian leaders bristle at the U.S. approach, pointing out that the United States is not perfect either. Repulsed by reports of violent crime and disintegrating families in the West, many Asians say they willingly trade some freedoms for stability and security.

"People who preach also should practice in order to be credible," Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad of Malaysia said in a magazine interview. "The U.S. has preached, but quite often it has not practiced."

On the issue of greatest urgency in the region, North Korea's nuclear programme, Asian leaders have shown a growing confidence in working together, sometimes in a direction different from what Washington would like.

In an unprecedented flurry of regional diplomacy last month, both President Kim Young-Sam of South Korea and Morihiro Hosokawa, then the Japanese prime minister, visited Beijing for talks on the North Korean issue.

Fearing a violent backlash from the unpredictable North Korean leadership, Asian leaders counselled patience and dialogue. Together, they appear to have dissuaded Washington from trying to isolate the reclusive Communist nation further with economic sanctions.

U.S. criticism of China's suppression of political dissent and its threat to withdraw Most-Favoured-Nation trade status, have scant support in Asia.

Instead of adding Japan's considerable economic leverage to Washington's push for human rights, Mr. Hosokawa told Chinese officials in Beijing he did not approve of the U.S. pressure.

"It is not sensible for Western countries to impose their values of democracy on other countries," he was quoted as telling Premier Li Peng.

When Chinese authorities rounded up more than 100 activists who demanded compensation for Japanese brutality in World War II, Tokyo made an inquiry, but no official protest — a clear contrast to Mr. Christopher's public outrage over the detentions of 17 dissidents during his own visit.

Beijing has since detained more dissidents, making it even more difficult for the Clinton administration to find reasons to extend the special trade status, which expires June 6.

"In the changing political

landscape of Asia, China is emerging more dominant than it was, thanks to its rapid economic growth and its billion-plus population," the Bangkok Post said in an editorial. "On the other hand, American influence is waning."

When President Kim of South Korea proclaimed a "new Asian era" in an address to Japanese lawmakers in March, he spoke not of Washington, but of Seoul, Tokyo and Beijing.

"We should share a lofty and grand vision encompassing the spacious Pacific that can strike a responsive chord in the minds of two billion Asians," he declared.

Kazuo Ogura, a senior official in the Japanese Foreign Ministry, says Asia is taking back many "rights" it conceded during the colonial era and during the cold war, when resistance to Communism came first.

Japan's military aggression earlier in this century left both the Japanese and their neighbours leery of domination by any power. China inspires a similar wariness.

The friction between Japan and the United States within an otherwise stable relationship suggests that, as the economic competitiveness of Asian nations grows, so will the challenge to U.S. influence.

By failing to treat Asians as equals, the United States is jeopardising its long-term interests in the region, said Yozo Yokota, professor of international law at International Christian University in Tokyo.

"The role of self-righteous superman might play well in domestic politics, but it's farcical in international relations," he said.

In Washington, the position is far different. Trade and good relations are seen both as important in themselves and as tools to promote human rights, which the Americans regard as universal.

LETTERS

A new vision for education

To the Editor:

WITH REFERENCE to Dr. Ahmad Majdoub's article "Teaching as a participatory process with teacher as coach" (Jordan Times, March 24), I would like to second all what Dr. Majdoub has raised in his article.

Even though the teaching/learning process has made fast progress in Jordan over the last years, some defective methods of education are still used, tarnishing the whole process. The overall situation of our teachers and students is not so pleasing.

Generally speaking, our students are passive and hardly creative; their role is to copy whatever the instructors say. During examinations, they just rewrite the information they have memorised and give it back to the instructor. This trend destroys the minds of the students and kills their creative thinking and innovation.

This problem originated at school and so does its solution. Students should be taught how to study on their own; how to read; how to understand; how to generate ideas and pass thoughts without being fully dependent on the teacher. Instructors, whether at school or university, should also be prudent enough and practical in their dealing with their students. Further, all instructors should take courses while studying, attend educational workshops and seminars about the modern methods of teaching. Certainly, not any person holding a PhD degree is well qualified to teach students; there should be something further!

Qusai Anwar Al Thebyan,
Yarmouk University,
Irbid.

Misleading news

To the Editor:

WHEN READING one of the Associated Press's articles entitled "Israelis tense after spate of bloodletting" (Jordan Times, April 10), one is irritated by the tone of the argument. People are used to the exaggeration of some reporters and their obviously misleading judgments. But when this exaggeration extends to very sensitive matters, like the conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis and the peace process, such opinions would only convey an incomplete picture of the real situation. Considerations should be given to both sides, at least, if the article was to make much sense.

The reaction of the Palestinians to the mosque massacre is only a natural response. Notice that it was a reaction and not an initiative to break the peace process as the article insinuates. If Israelis are allowed to commit massacres and then justify the act by blaming it on madness; it is absurd not to justify the answer to it.

Also, the article neglects the Palestinian's not only tense but miserable conditions of life in the West Bank, in the knowledge that they are the ones oppressed and governed by enemies that will continue to hate them to the end of time. The irony even becomes greater when the term "terrorism" is mentioned in a quotation by an Israeli parliament member: "What is the option, to surrender to terrorism?" To refuse tyranny and defend one's rights is described as terrorism. This is the first time in history when children throwing stones and being killed daily by a mighty army are called terrorists.

Propagandists can sometimes defy all logic and condition the whole of a national opinion through their cheap argument. As any other issue, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has to be reported with more honesty, so that the world can be able to know the truth.

Claudia Rafick Huwari,
Yarmouk University,
Irbid.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Former Palestinian delegates warn against self-rule accord

OCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The former head of the Palestinian team to the Middle East peace talks warned Monday that attacks against Israeli targets would persist if the peace agreement did not stop illegal Israeli actions in the occupied territories.

Negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi released a statement signed by about one-third of the 24 former negotiators and other Palestinian political figures saying the agreement had to do something about Jewish settlements, appropriating Palestinian land and the annexation of East Jerusalem, among other issues.

"I have said that I was against the Israeli-PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) agreement because it will not lead to a comprehensive, just peace," Dr. Abdul Shafi told a press conference.

Under the self-rule agreement that could be finalised in Cairo within a week, those sensitive issues are to be postponed until a final settlement within five years.

"The signing of such an agreement will not prevent the continued struggle of our people against the illegal actions of the Israeli occupier in the occupied Palestinian territories," said the statement read by Dr. Abdul Shafi, the Gaza physician used to head the Palestinian delegation to the talks in Washington.

The three-page statement said intermittent initialled agreements between Israel and the PLO, as well as the substance and direction of the negotiations, did not indicate that Israel was preparing to withdraw from all occupied territories.

The statement said public support among Palestinians for the agreement was being on the idea that they would bring about the implementation of

United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which stipulated Israel would withdraw from the occupied territories in exchange for recognition.

"Instead Israel is succeeding through these agreements in consolidating its illegal unilateral actions such as the establishment of Israeli settlements, the appropriation of land and the annexation and Judaisation of Jerusalem," the statement said.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, 74, a respected leader in the occupied lands, has rejected an offer by PLO chief Yasser Arafat to head the Palestinian National Authority.

"I have rejected all offers to be involved in any Palestinian authority," he said.

Palestinian intellectuals have for some months criticised the PLO and Mr. Arafat for failing to consult on the peace process and making too many concessions in the peace talks.

But Monday's petition was the first time anyone outside rejectionist guerrilla factions publicly talked of refusing to recognise a PLO-Israel agreement.

It came as negotiators from the two sides tried to wrap up an agreement in Cairo on the self-rule for Palestinians in Gaza and the Jericho area of the West Bank.

None of the group is a factional leader or activist likely to organise violent resistance to Israel or Palestinian self-rule after it begins.

But their endorsement of continued violent struggle would be a setback for the PLO.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, regarded as an elder statesman by Palestinians throughout the occupied territories, said it was too early to talk about withdrawing support from the PLO itself.

But he added: "I cannot predict what is going to happen

but I think it is the right of the people to resist occupation under all circumstances."

Asked if he would recognise the legitimacy of a Palestinian police force, to be deployed straight after an accord, he said: "It all depends on the agreement that is going to be signed."

The petition said the Oslo peace process showed Israel used peace talks to gain international legitimacy.

The group said the PLO was in effect helping Israel to ignore resolutions 242 and 338.

Signers of the petition include former negotiator Ghassan Al Khatib, Samir Abdallah who holds a senior position at the Palestinian development agency PECOAR, and human rights activists Raji Al Sourani and Raji Shihadeh.

Dr. Abdul Shafi said they were not forming a new political grouping or actively recruiting people to sign the petition. But they could take further undefined steps if Palestinian public responded favourably to the petition.

The three-page petition mentioned Jerusalem four times. In last year's Oslo agreement the PLO and Israel postponed discussion on the future of Arab East Jerusalem until final status negotiations in two years' time.

But meanwhile, Israel is busy building housing and infrastructure for a greater Jerusalem area stretching well into the West Bank. The housing ministry plans to build 6,000 units in the financial year 1994/95, most of them on occupied Arab land.

Leading Palestinians from inside the territories visited the PLO's Tunis headquarters in January to present much the same list of complaints. But they returned saying PLO leaders had paid little attention and there has been little contact since.

U.S. accepts Jordanian proposal

(Continued from page 1)

ance of pushing for progress in all four tracks and we look forward to understanding the importance of comprehensive peace.

"We talked about the resumption of the four bilateral tracks at Washington, D.C., and as soon as I complete this visit to the Middle East."

"We particularly agreed on the importance of moving forward to rapid implementation of the declaration of principles between the Israelis and the Palestinians after they conclude their agreement which we hope will be in the near future," added the secretary.

Answering a question on Israeli criticism of Jordan over the presence of Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) activists in the Kingdom, King Hussein reaffirmed Jordan's recognition of the Palestine Li-

beration Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

"We do not recognise any other organisation and will not allow any other group to operate in Jordan in a manner that would threaten to divide the Palestinians," he said.

The King said Arab coordination in the peace process had not been to the desired level to tackling "such serious matters" and expressed hope that it would "rise to the aspired-for level."

In a television interview later, the King said he was encouraged by the progress in peace talks. "It seems that peace is heading towards the region," he said. "We aim at stimulating matters towards a positive direction. I understand that they (the U.S.) are enthusiastic about peace and that there was progress on

a certain main track and very encouraging."

After his talks with King Hussein and on Tuesday in Riyadh, where he is expected to meet ministers from all six Gulf Arab states, Mr. Christopher is expected to seek to push the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations.

Mr. Christopher is aiming on this trip to reinvigorate Arab-Israeli peace talks that were thrown off course in February when an Israeli settler killed more than 30 Palestinians at the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron.

Formal bilateral peace negotiations involving Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan were originally set to resume in April but have been pushed back to May.

Israel and the PLO have resumed separate talks to implement the autonomy accord signed last September.

Majali welcomes Israeli comments

(Continued from page 1)

mitment to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, the prime minister said Jordan will be ready for discussing all issues related to the peace process when it resumes.

He said Jordan will take into consideration developments on other tracks of the negotiations which will lead to peace treaties in accordance with the Madrid formula.

Dr. Majali repeated Jordan's rejection of Israel's "illogical" demands to sign a peace treaty before resolving the issues on the agenda for the talks signed by the two countries in September last year.

He said the objective of the negotiations is to reach a peace treaty but only after all issues in the agenda have been resolved.

In reply to a question on the status of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Jordan, Dr. Majali reiterated that Jordan does not accept "any illegal grouping" and will only deal with the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.

Dr. Majali said Jordanian relations with some Gulf Arab countries have improved but said "some issues" remain unresolved between the Kingdom and Saudi Arabia.

"Time will reveal it all and the day will come when the brothers will realise that we did not do them any wrong at all," the prime minister told foreign correspondents at the Prime Ministry.

Dr. Majali held the Jordanian media responsible for the failure of the reconciliation efforts among Arab states, adding that Jordan received

some complaints from some Arab Gulf countries about reports carried by the country's unofficial media.

"The role of the press was not positive in improving relations," Dr. Majali said, expressing an opinion he has projected earlier.

Dr. Majali, who said the media "shoulders 95 per cent of the responsibility" for the tension in relations with the Gulf, said Jordan had told countries which complained that the media in Jordan are free and "we have never guided (them)," adding that the Press and Publication Law bans the publishing of news that harm friendly countries and legal cases have been launched against those who violated the law.

Pointing out that the government cannot control the unofficial press, Dr. Majali said, "the role played by the official media towards Arab relations is positive and there was nothing in them that could be interpreted as offensive to our brothers in the Arab countries."

Responding to a question on whether Egypt was trying to undermine Jordan's role in the region, Dr. Majali said that Egypt and Jordan had strong relations and the two countries look into means of strengthening them.

The prime minister said Jordan played a mediation role in the Yemeni conflict upon the

request of its leaders who trust the wisdom of His Majesty King Hussein. But he said there are differences in Yemen that might have become personal which makes the implementation of the reconciliation agreement signed in Amman difficult.

The prime minister said: "We believe in the Iraqi people, their freedom and (the need) to lift the injustice inflicted upon them."

The Iraqi people, he said, "are free in their choice of its leadership and we do not impose our opinion on them because we do not allow ourselves to interfere in the affairs of others."

Asked about the reported involvement of an Arab country in the assassination of Jordanian diplomat Naeb Maaytah in Beirut in January, Dr. Majali said the results of the investigation conducted by the Lebanese authorities did not name any country behind the assassination.

The prime minister said the two suspects arrested in the case admitted that their organisation, Abu Nidal group, assassinated Mr. Maaytah because it "was not happy with Jordan's policy."

It was "a big plot; too many people were involved," said Dr. Majali, adding that the assassins had planned to kill the Jordanian ambassador in Beirut.

Gorazde wounded evacuated

(Continued from page 1)

Maj. Holloway said Gorazde was mostly quiet but that Bosnian Muslims were shooting sporadically at retreating Bosnian Serbs.

"There is no more blood on the streets of Gorazde. There are no more deaths, pain and screams," said Enes Musovic, a ham radio operator from Gorazde.

Helicopters flew out 85 wounded on Sunday. On Monday, as warplanes flew overhead, two British Sea King helicopters carrying more wounded touched down at Sarajevo's Kosevo stadium. Subsequent flights brought several dozen more wounded to Sarajevo.

Between 400 and 600 in Gorazde still await evacuation, said spokesman Peter Kessler of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Dr. Genevieve Begkoyan, a UNHCR physician, said there was some sniping in Gorazde Monday, complicating efforts to get people from their homes to the stadium where the helicopters were waiting.

Serbs delayed the helicopters by making them land at a checkpoint for inspection and UNHCR staff on Sunday saw civilians killed by snipers as they tried to cross a bridge over the Drina, U.N. officials said.

A 14-truck convoy carrying 90 tonnes of aid arrived in Gorazde late Sunday, the first relief convoy since the Serb offensive.

Another convoy of 10 trucks carrying 80 tonnes of food was blocked crossing Bosnia on Monday, and the UNHCR instructed it to return to the

Yugoslav side of the border, said Candace Lacey, a UNHCR spokesman. It will try again Tuesday.

By Saturday night, more than 715 people had been killed and 1,970 wounded in Gorazde, Mr. Kessler said. Between 200 to 300 people died in the Gorazde hospital because of lack of staff, equipment and supplies. Serb shells killed several.

Serbs have won control of large pieces of the 200-square-kilometre enclave, a U.N. declared "safe area" that is home to about 65,000 residents and refugees.

The Bosnian Serb military says its forces captured 170 square kilometres, and hundreds of Serb refugees were returning to the area, the Bosnian Serb SRNA news agency reported.

It also said 30 Serb soldiers were killed and 100 wounded in the Gorazde offensive.

Countless cease-fires have collapsed in Bosnia's two-year-old war. This time, NATO was threatening to punish defiance, and more major players participated.

Bosnia's Serbs, armed by the federal Yugoslav army, launched the war in April 1992 when they rebelled against a Muslim-Croat vote for independence from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. More than 200,000 people have been killed or are missing.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev called for NATO to abandon the threat of air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs. "History has taught us that it is impossible to achieve a victory over the peoples of Yugoslavia by such methods," he said.

Israel, PLO study package

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Shohat said Israel and the PLO still differed on employment, currency, value added tax and import policy and duties.

"We are not ready to define the number of (Palestinian) workers that will cross over (into Israel) or... be obliged to pay them compensation if and when there is a situation in which they cannot come over," he said.

"The Palestinians are demanding this and it is unacceptable to us," Mr. Shohat said Israeli negotiators in Paris already had

given the Palestinians "a number of things that they wanted" but without a completed agreement "they cannot get them."

The two sides have already agreed on industry, agriculture, tourism and petroleum. In Paris on Friday, chief PLO negotiator Ahmad Qouria told Reuters the economic talks were making progress but the crucial trade issue remained to be solved.

Israel wants open markets with the territories and is demanding the Palestinians set Israeli-level customs tariffs on all but a limited list of goods to avoid becoming a gateway for smuggled goods, he said.

Investigators probe Geagea, followers

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanese investigators questioned former Christian warlord Samir Geagea and several followers on Monday about the 1990 murder of a rival Christian leader and the attempted murder of a government minister.

"This is the final chapter in clearing up the remnants of the civil war," a government official said of the crackdown on Dr. Geagea and his Lebanese Forces — once the strongest Christian civil war militia.

Christian critics say the offensive by the Syrian-backed government of Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri is not balanced. They say the government wants to crush the Christians who emerged weakened by the war.

Troops fired in the air on Sunday at the headquarters of the Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir to disperse 500 Geagea supporters trying to force their way in to see Patriarch Sfeir after Sunday mass.

The army had barred worshippers from mass after the patriarch asked the government to prevent a planned sit-in at his headquarters by Geagea supporters, patriarch officials said.

Judge Munir Hnein, who is investigating the murder of Dani Chamoun and his family, issued an arrest warrant against Dr. Geagea on Sunday after a 10-hour interrogation.

Chamoun, his wife and two sons were shot at their home on Oct. 21, 1990, eight days after Syrian troops stormed the Christian enclave and ousted rebel General Michel Aoun, officially ending Lebanon's 15 years of civil war.

Chamoun had close links to Gen. Aoun, Geagea's arch rival.

Dr. Geagea was detained on

Thursday for questioning about the Chamoun killings and a Feb. 27 church bombing that killed 11 people. Several LF members have been arrested for the church bombing.

Security sources said two Geagea bodyguards, Nabil Abu Al Nadr and Joseph Geagea, were also being interrogated about a foiled 1991 assassination attempt against then Defence Minister Michel Al Murr, a Christian.

Mr. Murr was slightly wounded by a car bomb that killed eight people.

The two suspects were among about 160 Geagea bodyguards and aides detained with him on Thursday. Most have been freed, the sources added.

The government decreed an amnesty for civil war crimes in 1991 but officials say the linking of LF members with the church bombing has put Dr. Geagea outside its terms.

Dr. Geagea has also isolated himself politically by refusing to join two cabinets since the war and officials say the action against him will not cause trouble in the Christian community.

If convicted Dr. Geagea could face the death penalty, which has been reactivated in Lebanon. The first execution in 11 years took place Saturday in Sidon.

A court source said members of the LF security services allegedly "confessed that Dany Chamoun's assassination was ordered by the head of the (former militia), Ghassan Touma," who was sentenced in absentia to 20 years in prison for his role in an abortive plot to kill President Elias Hrawi.

Mr. Touma is reported to be living abroad.

On Thursday Dr. Geagea told reporters his conscience was clear, saying "I am inno-

cent but I am ready to cooperate with the authorities."

Chamoun, the son of late Lebanese President Camille Chamoun, was secretary general of the Christian conservative National Liberal Party as well as a member of the political leadership of the LF militia.

He was killed after he broke ranks with Dr. Geagea and threw his support behind Gen. Aoun, who waged a "war of liberation" against the Syrian military presence in Lebanon and fought the LF.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

THE FIRST QUARTET FESTIVAL

★ "The Mozart Quartet of Salzburg" at the Hotel Inter-Continental at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE

★ Lecture in Arabic on the Egyptian art of graphics by artist Atiyah Hussein at Darat Al Funn of the Abdul Hameed Shoman in Jabal Luweibdeh at 6:00 p.m.

T.V.5 PROGRAMME

★ Weekly programme by T.V.5-Europe station entitled "Montagne" at the French Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

NEWS ROUND-UP

★ ABC Weekly News Highlights and the MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

DRAMA RECITAL

★ Drama recital in Arabic by Mr. Khalil Qandil at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture at 7:00 p.m.

FILM

★ Film in French entitled "Danton" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 7:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition by artists Dr. Ali Ghoul, Hussein Da'seh, Adnan Al Sharif, Abdul Hussein Tawaji, Salman Abbas, and Hafez Al Droubi at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

★ Exhibition of women's home-made products (including ceramics, sweets and handicrafts) at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition by paintings by artist Bahjaj Al Halkin at Alla Art Gallery (Tel. 639303).

★ "Spring Exhibition" of Jordanian industrial products at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road (11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.) (Tel. 847113).

★ Exhibition by artist Mustafa Al Hallaj at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens St. (Tel. 687598).

★ Exhibition by artists Alla Ammoura, Dorothy Mango, Hind Naser, Jahlne Saaf, Lucy Marto, Teta Wegelins at Ab'ad Art Gallery (10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) (Tel. 819861).

★ Exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Italian Language Centre (9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 669348).

★ Jordanian-Iraqi contemporary exhibition by over 80 artists at Ain Art Gallery in Wadi Saqra (9:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 644451).

★ Exhibition of sculptures and drawings by Jordanian sculptor Samer Tabbaa. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists at Darat Al Funn of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (Tel. 643251/2).

No political implication in move

(Continued from page 1)

students coming here for study and we extended residence permits for 2,764 West Bankers in Jordan and these include the destitute and certain cases for people who work here, in addition to lawyer trainees and

Palestinian wives of Jordanian men, he said.

According to Mr. Hammad, Jordan will be reviewing these regulations in the light of political developments in the region such as the expected return of the Palestine police and members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

S. Africa goes to polls today

(Continued from page 1)

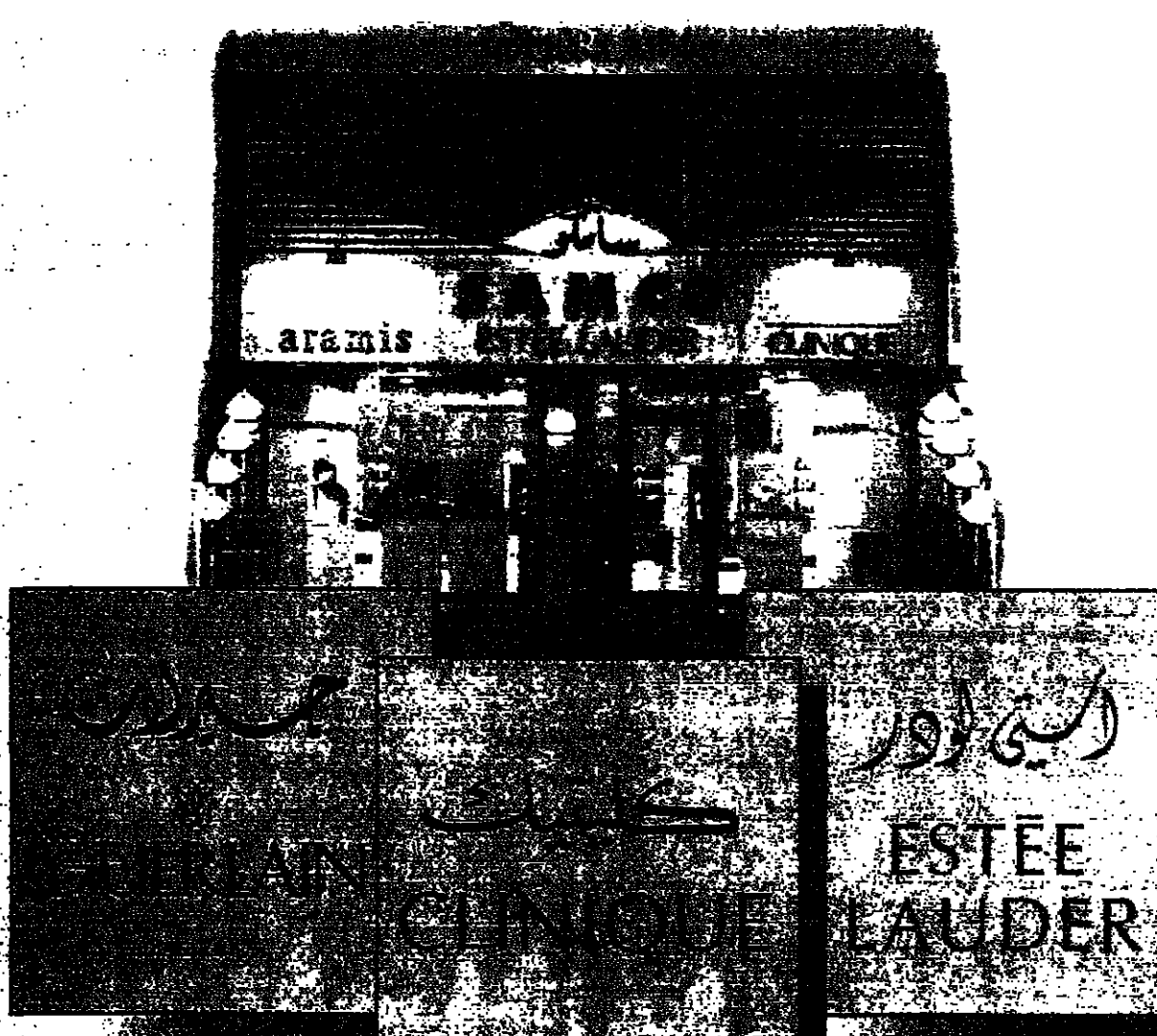
burg to bury four friends killed in factional fighting last week. "These people died so that the people of South Africa could be free. On April 27 the people of South Africa will be free," cried Siphiwe Sebeko, standing by four coffins draped in ANC flags.

President De Klerk, whose apartheid reforms will — bar-

ring an unimaginable upset — make him Africa's last white ruler, vowed to protect voters. "We are not going to allow the right wing or anyone else to delay this election," he told reporters after an emergency cabinet meeting.

The independent electoral commission said almost 23 million people would be going to 9,000 polling stations.

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Poor states seek own economic forum

WASHINGTON (R) — Tired of shouting in the dark, poor nations are considering setting up a permanent forum to lobby their wealthy neighbours for better aid, debt and trade deals.

The Group of 24 (G-24) is considering creating a permanent Secretariat, said Willy Zapata, Guatemala's central bank president and chairman of the G-24 which comprises eight Latin American, eight Asian and eight African nations.

He told a news conference held as part of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Bank spring meeting that a working group comprises representatives from nine

G-24 member states will soon be set up to study the creation of a secretariat and other proposals for Third World development.

Mr. Zapata said it was too early to tell what changes will be introduced, "but the feeling is that some changes are necessary."

In a report presented to the IMF-World Bank meeting, G-24 nations urged industrial countries to give them more aid, easier debt terms and better trade treatment.

The problem is that the group has been making such appeals every six months — at every IMF-World Bank meeting for most of its 22 years of existence — and not always achieving the desired results.

A permanent secretariat, an idea that emerged earlier this month at an informal G-24 meeting in Cartagena, Colombia, would help the group follow up on its quest for improved living standards in the developing world.

Addressing the G-24 meeting here, World Bank President Lewis Preston said the developing nations' overall outlook was good.

But the acknowledged that economic growth was bypassing some of the poorest nations, especially in Africa, and promised to seek additional aid. "The bank continues to work with its donor country members to increase aid volume," he said.

In their report, the G-24

ministers bailed the "encouraging growth prospects of the world economy."

But they said much remains to be done to improve the prospects of many developing nations where living standards have declined for most of the past two decades.

The report urged wealthy states to strengthen their support for poor nations' reforms, particularly in the form of additional concessional assistance, improved access to export markets and...outright reduction of the debt stock.

"In this context...the continuing application of subsidies and taxes by a number of industrial countries distorts international market shares," it said.

To make matters worse, it added, some wealthy nations are increasingly using "environmentally and social justifications for non-tariff trade restrictions on poor countries' exports."

The successful conclusion of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade's Uruguay Round is likely to boost world commerce and help developing nations in the medium and long-term.

But the group warned that some of the poorest countries, especially food importers, may suffer a short-term negative impact, especially if they lose trade preferences afforded by bilateral or multilateral agreements.

World Bank report says standards of living improved for world's poor

WASHINGTON (AP) — The World Bank Monday reported substantial progress for many of the world's poor with Asian countries making the largest strides and Africa falling behind.

"Hundreds of millions of the world's poorest people have achieved substantial improvements in their living standards over the past 20 years, although the progress has been uneven across countries," a bank statement said.

The bank report, "Social indicators of development," showed improvement in the 55 countries with lowest income and a population of 3.2 billion:

- Life expectancy increased from 53 to 62 years since 1970.
- Income per capita rose from \$190 in 1975 to \$390.
- Infant mortality decreased by one-third since 1970.

- Access to safe water rose from 33 per cent of the population in 1985 to 68 per cent.
- Primary school enrollment has increased 36 per cent in the past 20 years.

"We are making progress but it is not fast enough," said bank President Lewis Preston in a statement issued with the report.

The bank noted that about 30 per cent of the population in the developing world, one billion people, are living on about \$1 a day.

The best results have been in East Asia, the bank said, the worst in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Emmanuel Jimenez, head of the bank's poverty division, said in an interview that countries with the best record in alleviating poverty, both in terms of increasing income and improving quality of life, have followed a two-track approach.

They have followed a disciplined economic policy and they have invested heavily in human resources through education and health care.

"Countries that have done both of them together have had the best success," he said.

He picked out Thailand as a particular success. Bank figures showed that life expectancy in Thailand rose from 60 to 69 since 1970 while income per capita rose from \$670 to \$1,840 since 1980. Infant mortality was cut in half and access to safe water rose from 25 per cent of the population to 72 per cent.

China, with 1.2 billion people, showed an increase in life expectancy from 64 to 69 years from 1970 and an increase from \$270 to \$470 in per capita income since 1980.

The worst results were in sub-Saharan Africa excluding South Africa. In this region income dropped from \$570 per capita in 1980 to \$350 in 1992. However life expectancy rose

somewhat from 45 to 52 years and child mortality dropped by 35 per cent.

Results for some other countries in the last 20 years (to 1992):

- India: Life expectancy, 50 to 61 years; income, \$160 to \$310 per capita; safe water access, 31 to 75 per cent; infant mortality, 132 to 79 per thousand.

- Pakistan: Life expectancy, 49 to 59 years; income \$130 to \$420 per capita; safe water access, 25 to 36 per cent; infant mortality, 140 to 95 per thousand.

- Indonesia: Life expectancy, 42 to 52 years; income \$320 to \$670 per capita; safe water access, 11 to 42 per cent; infant mortality, 114 to 66 per thousand.

- Nigeria: Life expectancy, 42 to 52 years; income \$480 per capita; safe water access, 45 to 56 per cent; infant mortality, 135 to 84 per thousand.

- Philippines: Life expectancy, 58 to 65 years; income, \$340 to \$770 per capita; safe water access, 50 to 81 per cent; infant mortality, 64 to 40 per thousand.

- Turkey: Life expectancy, 58 to 67 years; income \$830 to \$1,980 per capita; safe water access, 68 to 92 per cent; infant mortality, 140 to 54 per thousand.

G-7 officials see tamed inflation, further growth

WASHINGTON (R) — The Group of Seven (G-7) countries said Sunday that global inflationary pressures seem largely contained and saw little reason for the slowly strengthening recovery to be interrupted by the upturn in long-term interest rates.

In a statement following five hours of talks by financial ministers and central bank chiefs, the G-7 however, agreed to cooperate closely to help keep a lid on excessive volatility in the currency markets and pledged to help Russia secure critical debt rescheduling.

"We continue to believe exchange rates should reflect economic fundamentals and that excessive volatility is undesirable," U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen said in a statement.

At the same time, the statement made clear that officials believed that inflation was muted and that the rise in long-term rates reflected that expectation that the global recovery would continue on

track. "We agreed the fundamentals are good, and we reiterated that inflation remains under control," Mr. Bentsen said, adding that "inflationary forces remain subdued, even in places where growth has exceeded expectations."

But not everything was sweetness and light. "We recognised that the contrast of strong growth in some economies and weak growth in others could seriously delay a narrowing of external payments imbalances," Mr. Bentsen said.

And unemployment remains "unacceptably high," he added.

The statement reinforced the belief that the worst may be over for the global economy as it adjusts to vast economic changes associated, in part, with the end of the cold war and the emergence of vast new economic strength in the emerging economies of Asia. "Collectively we are more encouraged than we have

been," Mr. Bentsen said. "And I must say I was pleased to hear the optimism around the table."

Mr. Bentsen said there was general agreement that the growth strategy that the G-7 put in place last year was working. That strategy involves deficit reduction in the United States, lower interest rates in Europe, and action by Japan to ensure strong domestic demand and a smaller trade surplus.

To combat the world's stubbornly high level of unemployment, the G-7 must implement more vigorously the growth strategy set up last year, Mr. Bentsen said.

"We recognise that excessive unemployment in some countries results from structural impediments to job creation," he said. "We all need to pursue policies to strengthen our labour markets and employment systems."

A senior U.S. official said that in a meeting between Mr. Bentsen and Japanese Finance Minister Hirohisa Fujii prior to

the G-7 meeting, Mr. Bentsen had renewed calls on Japan to do more to stimulate demand, and to cut its trade surplus.

Mr. Fujii, however, said that the United States had made no "big demands," and rejected economic forecasts released this week by the IMF as too low. He told reporters that his economy would pull out of a three-year slump this year to grow faster than the 0.7 per cent forecast by the IMF.

German Finance Minister Theo Waigel also predicted good growth, saying the German economy would grow at the top end of government forecasts in 1994 of one to 1.5 per cent, far above a 0.9 per cent IMF projection.

The G-7 spent a considerable amount of time discussing economic reform in Russia and during the meeting met with Russian officials, including Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Shokhin, who visited the meeting held in Washington's historic Georgetown District. Mr. Shokhin told reporters

Russia wants a more generous debt rescheduling deal from the Paris Club this year and in 1994 and made a pitch for more private investment for his country.

He emphasised he did not believe his country was in a position to add to its own deficit because of the need to make large repayments.

"I believe we will reach agreement in May or June, but we need a good agreement with the Paris Club," Mr. Shokhin said.

Turkey seeks IMF relief for ailing economy

ANKARA (R) — An International Monetary Fund (IMF) team will start talks in Ankara this week on a stand-by agreement to rescue Turkey's floundering economy.

Prime Minister Tansu Ciller called in the IMF to restore confidence after a rapid economic deterioration highlighted by the collapse of three small banks in the past three weeks.

Officials said the IMF mission was expected to arrive Friday following preliminary talks in Washington, where Economy Minister Aykon Dogan and other senior economic officials are attending the semi-annual IMF-World Bank meeting.

Turkey, where inflation, public deficits and interest

rates are spinning out of control, may seek short-term relief in stand-by credits worth up to 65 per cent of its IMF quota of 642 million Special Drawing Rights (\$900 million).

Ercan Uygur, an economics professor at Ankara University and former central bank advisor, said the IMF might also offer Turkey an extended fund facility — a three-year programme designed to cure structural balance of payments problems.

"IMF approval would make it easier for Ankara to return to foreign capital markets wary of Turkish risk after Moody's and Standard and Poor's cut Turkey's rating twice this year."

Considering the present

option but to ask for IMF assistance," Mr. Uygur told Reuters.

He said the IMF was likely to seek price rises, lower real wage levels, a further fall in the value of the lira, cuts in public spending, liberalisation of foreign trade, abolition of subsidies and quick privatisation.

Ms. Ciller's conservative Social Democrat coalition government has begun moving down this path, despite criticism from unions, leftwing politicians and the Islamist Welfare Party that the "imperialists" of the IMF will impose their will on Turkey.

If she wants the coalition to survive, Ms. Ciller may have to

heed pressure for democratic reforms from her minority Social Democrat partners, who are uneasy about her economic programme.

On April 5, Ms. Ciller announced austerity measures including one-off taxes, public sector price rises, closure of some state firms, faster privatisation and state spending cuts.

The initiatives on taxation and privatisation are still under debate in parliament.

Some officials say Ms. Ciller's 1994 revenue target of \$3.5 billion from selling off state enterprises is unrealistic. They expect the process to raise no more than \$2 billion.



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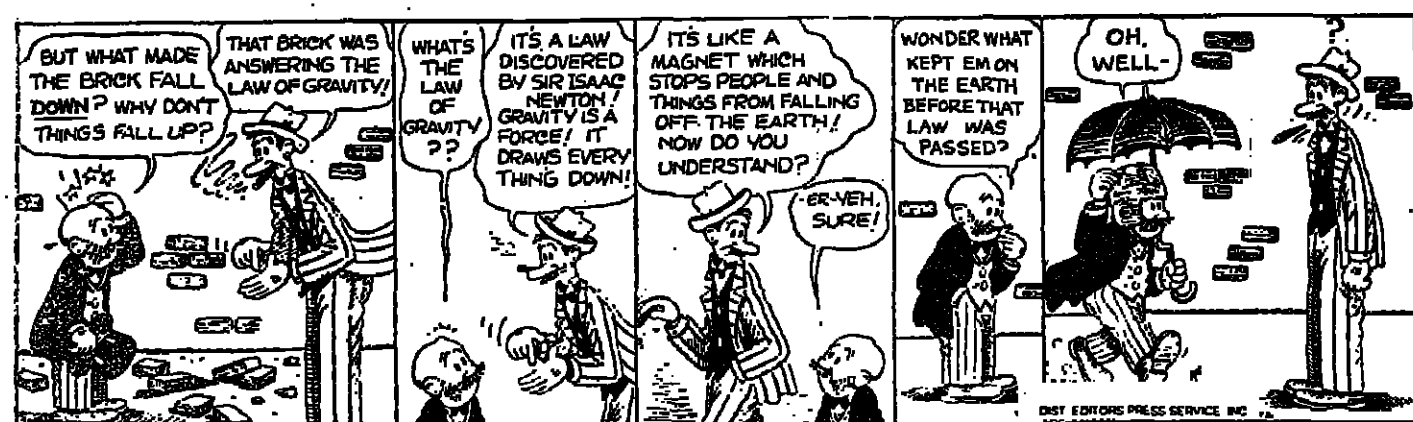
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India mulls creating free trade zone

NEW DELHI (R) — India is considering a plan to convert the Andaman and Nicobar islands in the Bay of Bengal into a free trade zone on the pattern of Hong Kong and Singapore, a minister was quoted as saying Sunday.

Minister of State for External Affairs Raghunandan Lal Bhatia told reporters in the northern city of Amritsar Saturday that Indian businessmen in Hong Kong and Thailand had urged New Delhi to make the islands an open trade centre.

Indian businessmen in Hong Kong were especially keen on the proposal, as the deadline for the British colony's transfer to Chinese rule approaches, the United News of India (UNI) quoted him here as saying.

Hong Kong is to revert to China in 1997, creating some uncertainty over the future of Indians in the colony.

Mr. Bhatia expressed confidence that China would ensure their "freedom and liberty of trade," UNI said.

The commerce ministry, meanwhile, is considering the proposal to make the islands a free trade zone, the minister said.

"But before a final verdict we have also to take into consideration the strategic position... from the security angle," he was quoted as saying.

Andaman and Nicobar, which served as a penal settlement during British colonial rule, are a group of more than 3,000 islands, a majority of them uninhabited.

They were occupied by the Japanese during the World War II. In 1956 the Indian government passed an act aimed at preventing the exploitation of the islands' aborigines and intrusion into their culture by outsiders.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY APRIL 26, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Richter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You may be dealing with others whose ideas are different from yours today and it is going to require that you be more supportive than usual. Otherwise some financial opportunity may slip away from you.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Morning may bring minor delays but later you can engage in creative tasks and accomplish a great deal. Be charming with others.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) There are likely to be some problems at home early in the day but later they clear up nicely. Think constructively on any duties.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Join with allies who want to help you improve routines and make life easier in the future. Handle business matters wisely.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Gain the help of a higher-up and solve a problem easily. Come to a better understanding with family members.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A good day to obtain the data you need so that you can make fine progress in career matters. Take no chance with your credit or finances.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Hit on the right system for getting bills paid on time.

Take pains to handle regular routines in a most efficient manner.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your associates are very cooperative where any plans you want to put across are concerned. Be more active and get ahead.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make plans so you know exactly where you are going in your career. Be more willing to agree with mate about changing conditions.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are inspired just how to gain cherished aims, so full speed ahead. Your hunches are accurate now for projects which need completion.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Handle your tasks well so that higher-ups will be impressed and you gain more benefits. Guard your reputation against possible damage.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Take an active part in new interests which could bring benefits and prestige to you and allies. Avoid unnecessary expenditures of money.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Keep busy at routine tasks which could bring added income in the future. Plan repairs to property that are needed to protect its value.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DOORE

SATY

MYLOC

SNIDUM



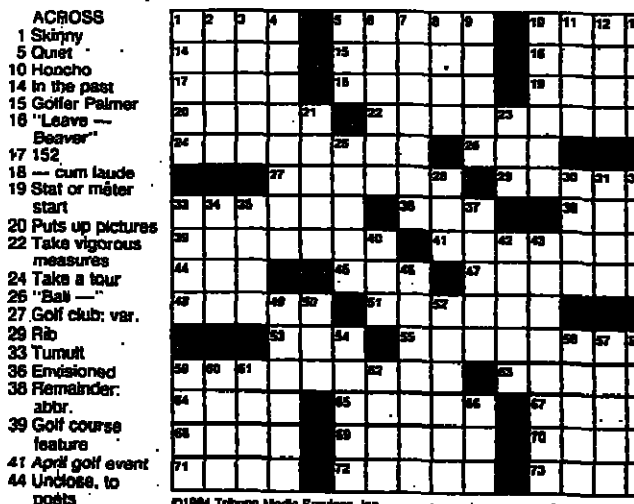
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: APRON MOUSE PODIUM QUENCH
Answer: What helped keep her dry in the rain — HER "PUMPS"

THE Daily Crossword

by Avery P. Bromfield



ACROSS
1 Skippy
5 Quet
10 Hoche
14 In the past
15 Goller Palmer
16 "Leave —"
17 152
18 — Gull laude
19 Start or miter
20 Puts up pictures
22 Take vigorous measures
24 Take a tour
26 "Bail"
27 Golf club: var.
28 Rib
33 Turnout
36 Emulsion
38 Remembrance
39 Golf course feature
41 April golf event
44 Undone, to
45 Brick carrier
47 Showy flower
48 Pacific isles
51 Seafile
53 Navy vessel
55 Case
59 Start of back nine
63 AKA
64 Purposes
65 Fitter
67 "No its —"
68 Scratch out
69 Blazing
70 Manner
71 Golf stroke
72 Cuff
73 Gemstone

DOWN
1 Lofthand and Nasse
2 Chou —
3 Making a hole in one
4 One next door
5 Goller Snead
5 Vestiges
7 Entrance
8 Director
9 Remove by percolation
10 One under per
11 Holy Roman Emperor
12 Fret
13 Shortly
14 "Mores"
23 "Tazy —"
25 Bernhard
28 Sweet potato
30 Adam's son
31 Hindu garment
32 Lanchester
33 Space lightning
34 Dea
35 Delicate strap
37 Ravine
40 One addressed
42 Anta or Mores
43 "Remember"
46 Olman
48 Beginning
50 Bat wood
52 Cuts the lip
54 Golf club part
56 Shear lute
57 Goller's side
58 English county
59 Clearest, briefly
60 Isaac's son
61 Highway
62 Theater award
66 Carrot grain



هذا من الأهل

Hata elected Japan's new premier

TOKYO (Agencies) — Tsutomu Hata, a populist with a down-to-earth style, became Japan's 51st prime minister Monday in a parliamentary vote that launched the second government of the eight-month-old ruling coalition.

Mr. Hata, 58, a bus conductor turned politician, won a majority of votes cast in each of the two chambers to be confirmed as successor to Morihiro Hosokawa, who quit as premier on April 8 over a personal loans scandal.

"We have decided to nominate Tsutomu Hata for prime minister," declared lower house speaker Takako Doi.

Mr. Hata's chief rival in the balloting, opposition leader Yohei Kono, predicted troubles ahead for the new administration.

"Hata comes to power at a time of political instability," said Mr. Kono, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

"I hope that Hata will be able to eliminate the people's distrust of politics," he told reporters.

Mr. Hosokawa, a self-proclaimed "Mr. Clean," chose to step down rather than face the humiliation of a grilling in parliament over two controversial personal loans dating back to the 1980s.

The once-dominant LDP had threatened to continue to hold hostage the state budget for 1994/95, due to take effect on April 1, until Mr. Hosokawa agreed to testify on his loans.

Mr. Hata, foreign minister in the outgoing administration, now faces an uphill battle in coordinating policy within an unruly coalition that nearly collapsed following Mr. Hosokawa's decision to quit.

The alliance wrangled bitterly for two weeks before agreeing on a watered-down platform of policies for the new government to follow.

The final document failed to resolve the two most contentious issues — how to reform the tax system, and what policy to adopt towards North Korea and its suspected nuclear weapons threat.

In the parliamentary vote, Mr. Hata won 274 votes in the 511-seat lower house, and 127 in the 252-member upper chamber.

He was expected to name a cabinet and then the new government would take the oath of office before Emperor Akihito.

Mr. Hata said earlier Monday he wanted to retain most of Mr. Hosokawa's ministers and give a post to Socialist leader Tomiichi Murayama, whose party is the largest but least reliable in the coalition.

"I think those who worked on drafting the new state budget should continue to represent the government," Mr. Hata said. "I think all the coalition party leaders (like Murayama) should be represented in the cabinet."

Mr. Hata becomes Japan's sixth prime minister in five years.

Political change was snail-paced during the LDP's decades of unchallenged power until then-premier Noboru Takeshita was forced to resign in 1989 amid public outrage over his government's links to corruption scandals.

After Mr. Takeshita, Japan saw three other LDP leaders come and go before the party crashed to defeat in the July 1993 general election and Mr. Hosokawa took the reins at the head of a broad alliance united only in their opposition to the LDP.

Mr. Hata takes over as Japan's economy is delicately poised for recovery and tensions are simmering over its huge trade surplus with the United States.

He has promised to put three economic tasks at the top of his agenda — enacting the long-delayed budget, reforming the tax system and taking steps to reduce the chronic trade gap.

Speculation is rife, however, that Mr. Hata's government will be run behind the scenes by his wily ally, Ichiro Ozawa, with whom he shares control of the Shinseitō (Renewal Party).

Mr. Hata has denied this would happen.

"It's a fabrication to say that we're setting up two-tiered power structure," he said at the weekend, adding he would put emphasis on building consensus with his partners.

Both Mr. Ozawa and Mr. Hata were protégés of LDP kingmaker Shin Kanemaru, who wielded immense power as Japan's backstage boss, installing and removing premiers at will.

After the old man was toppled by a corruption scam, Mr. Ozawa and Mr. Hata led a group of dissidents out of the LDP and launched the Shinseitō, now a pillar of the new



Newly elected Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata (centre) bows at the national diet during the lower house of parliament session which elected the former foreign minister as prime minister of Japan (AFP photo)

ruling coalition.

Mr. Hata, more than any of his predecessors, looks like the average Japanese worker he once was.

Before entering parliament in 1969, Mr. Hata worked for a bus company for 10 years. Now he has risen to the top in politics, many Japanese find his plain-speaking manner a refreshing change from the mealy-mouthed politicians they are used to.

He is the man with the most ministerial experience in the coalition. Before taking the foreign affairs portfolio last August, he had served successively as farm and finance ministers under LDP administrations.

Mr. Hata vowed Monday to observe the country's war-renouncing constitution during a meeting with lower-house speaker Takao Doi, parliament officials said.

Ms. Doi, a constitutional lawyer and former chairwoman of the Social Democratic Party, asked Mr. Hata to pass the government's stalled budget as soon as possible while promoting political reforms and observing the constitution.

Mr. Hata replied that it was "natural" for the new government to carry out such re-

quests. "Although there are various discussions, the cabinet must be in a position to observe the constitution. I hope the idea of Japan's anti-war constitution will become widely known throughout the world," he said.

The Japanese constitution, imposed by the United States after World War II, renounces the use of force in settling international disputes.

But hawks in both the ruling coalition and opposition parties have recently called for a revision to meet possible contingencies arising from North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programme.

Meanwhile, South Korea's Foreign Ministry Monday congratulated the newly elected Japanese prime minister and expressed hope for continued friendly relations between the two countries.

"We welcome the launching of a new Japanese government led by Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata," a Foreign Ministry statement said.

The statement also expressed appreciation to outgoing Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa for his contributions in promoting bilateral ties during his tenure.

Military coup fails in Burundi

BUJUMBURA (R) — A military coup failed in the Central African state of Burundi early Monday when soldiers refused to take part for fear of triggering a tribal bloodbath like the one raging in neighbouring Rwanda.

Burundi Army Chief of Staff Colonel Jean Bikomagu told Reuters that coup organisers and supporters had been arrested and were being questioned by the military high command.

"A group of soldiers from a barracks in Bujumbura planned a putsch but they were stopped by loyalists when they left their post to execute their plans overnight," Col. Bikomagu said.

"Several soldiers have been arrested and the military command is interrogating them to find out why they wanted a military takeover."

Col. Bikomagu said the capital was calm, but aid workers reported sporadic shooting in slum areas inhabited by the

majority Hutu tribe, whose recent attempts to win a political voice have enraged the Tutsi-dominated army.

Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira was killed with his Rwandan counterpart Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6 when a rocket downed their plane at the airport in the Rwandan capital Kigali.

The warlike Tutsi — a minority in both Burundi and Rwanda — were the main victims of tribal slaughter this month in Rwanda, where politics and the armed forces have long been dominated by the Hutu.

In Burundi, however, it was tens of thousands of Hutu who died after Tutsi soldiers overthrew Melchior Ndadaye, the country's first Hutu president, in a coup last October. Mr. Ndadaye was voted into office a few months earlier in polls monitored by Western observers.

Aid agencies and the U.N. say as many as 100,000 people

may have been killed and two million displaced in this month's Rwandan bloodbath. But Burundi, which quickly named Hutu Sylvester Ntibunganya as interim president, stayed relatively calm.

Government offices in Bujumbura remained shut Monday morning. Residents stayed indoors.

"No one is going to work. Government offices are closed and tribal tension is at its height," one resident said.

Journalists in Bujumbura said the coup failed mainly because moderate soldiers feared the chaotic example of their northern neighbour, where government forces and rebels of the Rwanda Patriotic Front are now battling for control of Kigali.

"The moderates won this time. They feared another wave of killings so soon after what happened after the death of President Melchior Ndadaye last October. They wanted no role in new anarchy," a Western journalist told Reuters.

New massacres reported in Rwanda; rebels gaining ground in fighting

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Rwandan rebels and government forces clashed in heavy artillery duels overnight in the capital, Kigali, officials said Monday. A radio station urged militias to step up the murder of civilians.

About 170 hospital patients were slaughtered Sunday in the southern city of Butare, and the United Nations was getting "disturbing reports" of other massacres in the countryside, U.N. spokesman Abdul Kabia said.

"Radio RTLM is calling on militias to step up the killing of civilians," he said in a telephone interview from Kigali. He said the radio was controlled by two political parties of the majority Hutu tribe.

An estimated 100,000 people have been killed since a suspicious April 6 plane crash killed the president and triggered a new wave of ethnic bloodletting between the Hutus and minority Tutsis.

Efforts to open talks to end the carnage collapsed Sunday when the government delegation failed to reach Arusha, Tanzania. Mr. Kabia said officials of the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front left Tanzania later Sunday.

U.N. military officials were continuing to talk to the rebels and the government forces in an effort to arrange a ceasefire

and open talks. However, Mr. Kabia said there seemed to be no hope of getting any talks started soon.

Kabia said the rebels reported they only went to Tanzania to explain their position and had no intention of negotiating with the government.

A U.N. official in Kigali, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the government appeared to be losing the battle for the capital.

"The RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) is pushing reinforcements into Kigali, has seized major terrain and has developed a lot of defensive positions in the north and northeast," he said.

"Government attempts to dislodge them have been fruitless and have resulted in heavy casualties. It appears the RPF has encircled a number of garrisons and gained ground in other areas. The government forces are mostly just reacting," the source said.

Marauding gangs of Hutus, wielding machetes and automatic weapons, roam the streets killing Tutsis. The two sides have fought for political supremacy since Rwanda won independence from Belgium in 1962.

Two million people have fled their homes and thousands more are barricaded in build-

ings in desperate efforts to escape the bloodletting, which has spread to the countryside.

Aid workers said the hospital massacre that killed 170 patients prompted the international relief group Doctors Without Borders to pull its workers out of the region.

U.N. relief agencies also have pulled their staff out of the country to escape the slaughter. That leaves only the Red Cross and a handful of other private aid organisations to cope.

A U.N. team is in Kigali to assess the scope of the humanitarian disaster. There have been warnings of epidemics and possible famine.

The United Nations was trying to arrange to send truckloads of food and medicine into Rwanda from neighbouring Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania to care for the refugees, Mr. Kabia said.

U.N. officials also planned to fly more relief goods into Kigali and were negotiating with the warring parties to arrange safe passage of the food and medicine to displaced people in the capital.

In neighbouring Burundi, thousands of Rwandans fleeing their homeland were arriving with gunshot and machete wounds, a Western diplomat said Sunday.

Norwegian explorer lifted off North Pole

OSLO (R) — Norwegian explorer Boerge Ousland, the first person to reach the North Pole alone and unaided, has been air-lifted off the icecap, his spokesman said. "He was picked up by plane and the landing went perfectly," Hans Christian Erlandsen told Reuters. Two planes arrived at the

poles carrying a total of 14 people, including reporters and photographers and Mr. Ousland's father bringing a bottle of champagne and a cake. After over an hour of interviews and filming, the planes left for the Canadian weather station Eureka, a six-hour flight from the pole.

Mr. Ousland, a 31-year-old North Sea diver, built up fat reserves by drinking a glass of olive oil for breakfast every day for a year before setting off. He has not changed clothes or washed during the 1,000 kilometres trek which started in Siberia.

"I've been freezing a lot. My face looks like a meatball and my hands are also frostbitten," he said, but added that condition was not too serious. Temperatures at the North Pole can plunge to minus 50 degrees Centigrade (-58 F).

Contestants begin arriving for Miss Universe pageant.

MANILA (AP) — Contestants from around the world have begun arriving for the Miss Universe pageant, which climaxes next month in a glitzy ceremony in the Philippine International Convention Centre. First to arrive Sunday was Miss USA Frances Louise Parker, a 26-year-old teacher from South Carolina. "I heard you have great islands and beautiful people," Miss Parker told reporters at Manila's airport.

Other early arrivals included Miss Thailand, Areeya Chunsai; Miss Uruguay, Leonora Debuono; Miss Swaziland, Nicola Smith; Miss Britain, Michaela Fyke; Miss Romania, Michele Ciocacu; Miss Cook Islands, Lelaine Brown; and Miss Australia, Michelle Van Eimeren. Contestants from 90 countries will be competing for the title. Until the finals, they will travel to resorts throughout the country for promotional shoots. The current Miss Universe is Dayanara Torfes for Puerto Rico. She arrived here last week. Finals are set for 8 p.m. (1200 GMT) Saturday May 21, or Friday night in the United States, the pageant's prime television market.

Spanish gays demand right to marry

MADRID (AFP) — Spanish homosexuals have demanded the right to marry people of the same sex, the news agency EFE reported. Quoting a communiqué from the Federation on Gay Associations of Catalonia, Jordi Petit and Isabel Castro, leaders of the federation and the Gay-Lesbian Platform, the two main homosexual associations in Spain, said at a meeting in Barcelona that Madrid should grant full recognition of the rights of homosexual couples, including marriage, in line with a recent recommendation of the European Parliament, EFE said.

Skinflinch shocks Chinese TV viewers

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese fans of a long-running television series were stunned last month when, during a regular advertising slot, they were treated to 90 seconds of hard-core pornography, a report seen here said. Seven employees of a local television station in the central province of Henan are currently in police detention following the obscene broadcast, which occurred during prime time programming on March 10, the Tianjin Lele Daily said in its April 20 edition. According to the newspaper, a group of technicians had used the station's facilities to copy a pornographic video which then got mixed up with advertising cassettes. Consequently, viewers settling down for the latest episode of the popular series depicting 1930s Hong Kong gangster society were suddenly subjected to one-and-a-half minutes of raunchy action in place of the usual plugs for soft drinks and air conditioners. The provincial authorities launched an immediate inquiry and suspended the station's director and two vice-directors, the daily said, adding that investigations were continuing. It is the second such incident to have occurred in Henan in the space of a year. In April 1993, two men were arrested after inadvertently airing a pornographic tape to the public for more than 10 minutes.

N. Korea resists pressure with war rhetoric

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea reaffirmed its stiff resistance Monday to regular checks of its facilities suspected of being part of a nuclear arms programme and boasted its readiness to answer "war with war."

In Seoul, a five-day military anti-espionage exercise was launched in and around the capital following reports that all North Korean military paramilitary groups have been ordered to go on high alert.

The North Korean Workers Party newspaper said that demands from the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for North Korea's full compliance with nuclear safeguards were "unjustifiable and unreasonable."

The newspaper Rodong Sinmun said that North Korea had remained on a "unique status" since last June when it suspended an earlier decision to leave the nuclear nonproliferation treaty (NPT).

North Korea therefore is not required to fully comply with the safeguard agreement. According to the newspaper commentary carried by Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) monitored here.

The headline Communist state joined the NPT in 1985 but refused to sign the safeguard accord with the IAEA until 1992.

The order for high alert was issued at a mass rally in Pyongyang Sunday to commemorate North Korea's armed forces day on April 25, the South Korean state-run news agency Naewoo Press said.

KCNA quoted North Korean Vice Armed Forces Minister and Vice Marshal Kim Kwang-jin as telling the rally: "It is our unshakable position to answer dialogue with dialogue, and war with war."

Mr. Kim accused the United States and "international reactionaries" of trying to isolate and stifle North Korea over the nuclear issue.

"If the U.S. imperialists and their followers unleash a war in Korea, going against the trend of the times, our people and

people's army will fight it out for the party and the leader and for the Socialist motherland, which has been defended at the cost of blood (to) wipe out the aggressors to the last man," he said.

After months of resistance North Korea allowed IAEA inspectors to check some nuclear sites in March but denied them access to a key-radiochemical laboratory, further fuelling suspicions that it was building nuclear arms.

North Korea celebrated its Armed Forces Day as the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Army. A historical anomaly attributable to the sweeping personality cult surrounding President Kim Il-Sung's family.

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Armando Calderon Sol (centre), leader of the Salvadoran ruling Republican Nationalist Alliance (ARENA) is flanked by his wife Elizabeth Aguirre (right) and his running mate Enrique Borgo as they celebrate Calderon's victory in the country's second round presidential runoff. Calderon won in a landslide victory over his leftist rival Ruben Zamora (AFP photo)

Rightist wins El Salvador presidency

SAN SALVADOR (R) — Armando Calderon Sol swept to victory in El Salvador's first post-war presidential elections but may have to cut deals with former rebel leaders to keep a delicate peace process alive.

With more than 90 per cent of votes counted from Sunday's election, Mr. Calderon Sol had 68 per cent support, more than double the vote of his leftist rival Ruben Zamora.

But even as the ruling right-wing ARENA party held rowdy celebrations to mark Mr. Calderon Sol's emphatic win, ex-guerrilla chiefs warned he would be ill-advised to impose his will without their support.

In response, Mr. Calderon Sol struck a conciliatory tone in his victory speech, saying he would look for cross-party support when he takes office on June 1 and pledging his full commitment to the U.N. peace accords that ended El Salvador's 12-year civil war two years ago.

"My first act will be to continue the exact and loyal compliance with the peace accords," Mr. Calderon Sol said, adding that he will meet next month with U.N.

Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to discuss implementation of key electoral, judicial and security reforms.

Mr. Calderon Sol, a 45-year-old lawyer, is a founding member of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) and was for several years linked to ultra-right party members allegedly involved in financing and organising death-squad murders.

His candidacy has raised concern that the peace process could slow down or go into reverse as party hardliners look for greater influence by replacing some of the moderate technocrats in the government of outgoing President Alfredo Cristiani.

Mr. Calderon Sol appeared anxious to calm those fears. "We are going to govern for all Salvadorans. Our great task and mission will be to consolidate peace and assure political stability and governability," he said.

Leaders of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), who won second place in March 20 legislative elections just 15 months after disarming their

guerrilla army, took advantage and called for consensus government.

"We are the second strongest power and he will have to negotiate with us. The peace requires it," said Joaquin Villalobos, a leading FMLN commander throughout the war.

The FMLN will have 21 seats in the 84-member legislative assembly which begins work on May 1. ARENA will have 39 seats and hold a narrow working majority thanks to the support of the four deputies from the pro-army National Conciliation Party.

Veteran Communist leader Schafik Handal said the new government will have to respect the FMLN's quota of power. "Calderon Sol can no longer treat us as terrorists," he said.

But the FMLN and its defeated presidential candidate, leftist legislator Ruben Zamora, remain suspicious of the new president-elect.

"He does not want to comply with the peace accords. It is that simple," Mr. Zamora told Reuters last week.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kipkai wins Turin Marathon

TURIN, Italy (AP) — Michael Kipkai of Kenya, running in his first major marathon, surged out of a pack that included world record holder Belayneh Dinsamo of Ethiopia, to win the Turin Marathon by nearly 16 seconds. Kipkai finished in 2 hours, 10 minutes, 7.5 seconds. He was 15.8 seconds ahead of Turbo Tumbo of Ethiopia. Dinsamo finished 12th at 2:25:04.4. Laura Fogli of Italy won the women's division in 2:31:44. About 2,000 runners from 20 nations took part in the race.

Fans pay Old Trafford tribute to Busby

LONDON (R) — Almost 10,000 soccer fans paid an emotional tribute to legendary Manchester United manager Sir Matt Busby Sunday in a thanksgiving service at Old Trafford Stadium. Fans and players from Busby's great teams — including Bobby Charlton, Denis Law and Harry Gregg — turned the stadium into a cathedral with hymns and prayers in a unique service in memory of Busby, who brought the club from the despair of the 1958 Munich disaster to European Cup glory 10 years later. Busby's former seat in the front row of the directors' box remained empty, as it has since his death in January, aged 84.

Brazil wins world youth title

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Sao Paulo of Brazil surprised Germany's fancied Bayer Leverkusen with a 3-0 victory Sunday, clinching the second Al Wahda International Youth Soccer Championship. Half-time score was 2-0. The Brazilians had the upper hand in the final with striker Renato Olegario firing them ahead in the 12th minute of the first half. He scored again four minutes later. Substitute Carlos Junio closed off the match with a goal for the champions in the 31st minute of the second half. Earlier, FC Porto of Portugal clinched third place in the 10-nation tournament after Joel Cabral scored a dramatic last minute goal to edge out Egypt's Zamek 2-1. Half-time score in the playoff match was 1-0.

Late goal sinks United States

CHULA VISTA, California (AP) — A goal from Bjarki Gunnarsson four minutes from time gave Iceland a 2-1 victory in a pre-World Cup friendly international against the United States here Sunday. The United States, who open their World Cup campaign against Switzerland in June, went behind in the first-half when Helgi Sigurdsson scored after 20 minutes. Frank Klopas put the home side back on level terms two minutes after the interval when he latched on to a cross from Paul Caligiuri and rifled home a superb left-footed shot. The latest defeat is a major blow to the Americans' morale. So far this year under coach Bora Milutinovic they have won only two, lost three and drawn seven matches.

Moroccan Al Mouaziz wins in Madrid

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Abdelkader Al Mouaziz of Morocco braved torrential rain and low temperatures Sunday to outrun more than 4,000 competitors and win the Madrid Marathon. Al Mouaziz covered the 42-kilometer course in two hours, 17 minutes and 39 seconds. Spain's Ramiro Matamoros finished second in 2:19:09 while Juan Torres, also of Spain, came third, 14 seconds behind his countryman. The 25-year-old Moroccan led the field from the start along with Russian Vladimir Fomin, who finished fourth in 2:20:18.

Gold medal stolen from Olympic champ

MOSCOW (AP) — A disabled Russian skier appealed Monday for thieves to return the gold medal he won last month in the downhill ski race in Lillehammer, Norway. Alexei Moshin, 19, was held up Sunday after he accepted a ride in a private car from his Siberian hometown of Kemerovo to accept an award for bravery from President Boris Yeltsin. Moshin lost both of his legs when he was hit by a train in a childhood accident. He skis with artificial limbs.

Iran turns down sporting offer

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran have bypassed the opportunity to break a 15-year sporting barrier with the United States by turning down an invitation to take part in a wrestling competition in California. Mohammad-Reza Taleghani, vice-president of the Iran Wrestling Federation, said Monday they would not send a team to the international cup at Concord, California, on May 27-28 because they were following government policy. However, he said he had informed the foreign affairs ministry of their wish to compete in a junior event in Chicago June 24-30. Tehran and Washington broke off relations in 1980 and the invitation to Concord was the first time an Iranian sports team had been invited to the U.S. since the 1979 Islamic revolution. Iran had complained last year the U.S. authorities had refused their wrestlers visas to compete in the World Cup.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNIAH HIRSH
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ENLIST THE ENEMY'S AID

Both vulnerable. North deals.
NORTH
♠ 10 7 6
♥ A 3 2
♦ A 6 2
♣ J 6 3
EAST
♠ 9 8
♥ Q 10 7 6
♦ K Q 10 7 5 4
♣ J 9 8 2
SOUTH
♠ K Q 9 8 5
♥ K 5 4
♦ 3
♣ K 5 4
The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Opening lead: King of ♠
Once in a while it is obvious that for declarer to break a suit would be tantamount to committing suicide. On those occasions it is well to see what can be done about co-opting the enemy's aid.
Note North's opening bid. The phrase "better minor" is actually a misnomer — "longer" minor is the norm. When the choice boils down to between two three-card minors, it is almost always correct to open one club. We could imagine making an exception if our diamonds were A Q x and clubs x x x. Against four spades West attacked with the king of diamonds. Declarer could count a sure heart loser and the club situation was not promising. The two-level overall almost surely marked West for the ace of clubs, which meant that, unless West held the queen as well, there were three possible club losers if declarer broached that suit. Since the enemy were unlikely to open clubs of their own volition, declarer found a simple line to enlist their cooperation. Declarer won the opening lead in dummy and immediately ruffed a diamond. Two rounds of trumps were drawn and another diamond ruffed to eliminate the ace and king of hearts before exiting with a heart. It made no difference which defender won the heart. If it was West, that defender would have to lead a club up to the king or yield a ruff. If it was East, declarer could guarantee a club trick by simply playing low on the forced club shift. Making four-odd.

Graf defies threats

HAMBURG, Germany (AP) — Steffi Graf said here Monday she would defy attack threats at the Hamburg tennis tournament, where Monica Seles was stabbed last year.

The world number one from Germany, responding to an anonymous letter published by the Hamburger Morgenpost, said: "I didn't know about it until I read the newspapers but I am not afraid of these things and don't think much about the threats."

"We don't have to have too much security, because we need to be close to the fans. You can't go out on the street and be afraid. I am not. I've learned to live with the threats."

The letter, which referred to the knife attacks on Seles last year by Graf fan Gunter Pasche, read: "Even innocent people could be hurt because we do not play with kitchen knives."



Italian coach for Bayern

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — Giovanni Trapattoni becomes the first Italian to coach a German first division side next season after signing at Bayern Munich Monday.

The 55-year-old, who won six Italian titles and three European trophies with Juventus, signed a one-year contract with an option for another year. He has been released by Juventus.

Franz Beckenbauer, who has been doubling up as vice-president and coach since January, did not want to continue as coach.

Trapattoni, who has already started a crash course in German, is on a basic salary of 1.5 million marks (\$880,000).

Vicario defeats Majoli to win La Familia Open

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Spain's Arantza Sanchez Vicario, the world's No. 2, trounced 16-year-old Iva Majoli of Croatia 6-0, 6-2 in 46 minutes Sunday to win the \$400,000 La Familia Open.

Majoli, the girl seen as one of the most promising women tennis players, hardly got a look-in against a Sanchez Vicario who won point after point with ease.

Sanchez Vicario won the first set in just 19 minutes.

"Despite the result, the truth is I had to fight a lot, and with aggression, against a rival who I'm convinced will be among the top 10 in the world in the future," said Sanchez Vicario.

It was the Spaniard's fourth time to win the La Familia Open.

As regards her own future, she said: "I'm preparing for Paris (Roland Garros tournament), because it's the tournament I like most, but I still have unfinished work at Wimbledon, where I have never even made it to the semifinals."

Sunday's final was the second this season for Majoli who is ranked No. 27 in the world and is the youngest full-time player on the WTA tour.

In semifinal play Saturday, she defeated the world's No. 14 Magdalena Maleeva 5-7, 6-4, 6-2. In the quarterfinals she beat world No. 3 Conchita Martinez of Spain.

Sanchez Vicario, the tournament's top seed and a native of Barcelona, swamped Germany's Sabine Hack 6-0, 6-1 in her semifinal.

Robinson takes NBA's scoring title with sensational finale

LOS ANGELES (R) — David Robinson clinched the league scoring title on the final day of the regular season in spectacular fashion Sunday when he became only the fourth player in National Basketball Association (NBA) history to score more than 70 points in a game.

Robinson poured in 71 points in a 112-97 San Antonio victory over the Los Angeles Clippers to edge Shaquille O'Neal for the NBA scoring title.

Robinson came into the game trailing O'Neal by .04 points per game, but his awesome performance Sunday gave "the admiral," 29.79 average to 29.35 for "Sha." Robinson joined Wilt Chamberlain, David Thompson and Elgin Baylor as the only players in NBA history to score 70 or more points in a game. Even Michael Jordan, with all his tremendous performances, never reached that plateau.

The Spurs finished the regular season at 55-27, while the Clippers finished at 27-55, 36 games out of first place.

In Orlando, Shaquille O'Neal scored 32 points as the Magic crushed the New Jersey Nets 120-91 for their 50th win. O'Neal, who also grabbed 22 rebounds, came into the game needing to score 68 points to pass Robinson for the scoring title.

Orlando, which reached 50 wins in just their fifth year in the league, is the fourth seed in the Eastern Conference playoffs and will host the Indiana Pacers on Thursday.

The Nets ended the season at 45-37.

At Cleveland, the Cavaliers routed the Celtics 107-81 to clinch the sixth playoff spot in the east and a first-round showdown with the defending NBA champion Chicago Bulls.

The Cavaliers finished at 47-35 to edge New Jersey for the sixth playoff spot and earn a chance for post-season revenge. Chicago has eliminated Cleveland from the playoffs in

four of the last six seasons. The Celtics finished 32-50 for its first 50-loss season since 1979.

In the final regular season game at Chicago Stadium, Patrick Ewing scored eight of his 25 points during a 13-2 third-quarter surge to lead the New York Knicks to a 92-76 win over the Bulls.

New York ended its season at 57-25, tying the championship 1972-73 squad for the third-best record in franchise history.

New York wrapped up the second-best record in the Eastern Conference and will open the playoffs at home against local rivals, the New Jersey Nets.

The Bulls finished 55-27, two games off last year's pace.

In Portland, Gary Payton scored 12 of his 18 points during a 26-6 second-half run to lift the Seattle SuperSonics to a 110-108 victory over the Trail Blazers.

Seattle, which will face Denver in the first round of the playoffs, won 17 of its final 19 games to finish with the best record in the NBA at 63-19. The Sonics will have home-court advantage throughout the entire playoffs.

Portland ended its season at 47-35.

The Blazers are seeded seventh in the west and will open the playoffs in Houston.

At Washington, Tom Gugliotta scored 31 points and grabbed 18 rebounds as Washington won 117-99 over the Charlotte Hornets in West Unseld's final game as coach of the Bullets.

The 48-year-old Hall of Famer, who led the Bullets to a 202-345 record over the last seven seasons, announced his resignation following the game.

Washington ended its season with a 24-58 record to miss the playoff for the sixth consecutive year. The Hornets, who also failed to qualify for post-season, finished at 41-41.

At Los Angeles, Karl Malone scored 15 of his 24 points in the third quarter and John Stockton netted the game's final four points as the Utah Jazz held off the Lakers 103-97.

The Jazz (53-29) won eight of the last nine games to finish fifth in the Western Conference. They will face San Antonio in the first round of the playoffs after beating the Spurs in all five of their meetings this season.

The Lakers finished with a club-record 10 straight losses and will miss the playoffs for the first time since 1976. The Lakers went 5-11 under head coach Magic Johnson, who has said he will not return next season.

In Houston, Robert Pack scored 23 points to power the Denver Nuggets to a 115-107 win over the Rockets.

Rodney Rogers added 16 for the Nuggets, who closed out the season with four wins in their last five games to finish with a 42-40 record.

The Rockets finished their best season ever at 58-24, winning the Midwest division title.

In Philadelphia, Orlando Woolridge scored six of his 34 points during a key fourth-quarter spurt to lead Philadelphia 76ers to a 110-102 win over Detroit as the Pistons ended the season on a 13-game losing streak.

Philadelphia completed its worst season since 1974 with a 24-58 record. Detroit's 20-62 mark was its worst since 1979, 81, when the Pistons were 16-66.

In Sacramento, Spud Webb scored 25 points and Mitch Richmond added 23 to lead the Kings to a 105-97 victory over the Golden State Warriors.

Sacramento ended the season at 28-54 and missed the playoffs for the eighth straight season, the longest current streak of any team.

The Warriors, who had an eight-game winning streak snapped, finished at 50-32.

Top soccer teams find the going tough

PARIS (AP) — Top teams found the going tough in Europe this weekend.

In France, hot favorites Paris St. Germain crashed out of the French Cup when they were beaten at home by Lens in the quarter-finals.

Spanish league pacesetters Deportivo la Coruna had their lead over rivals Barcelona reduced to two points when they were held to a goalless draw at Lerida.

And in Italy, Arsenal's opponents in the European Cup Winners Cup final May 4, crashed to a 2-0 defeat at Napoli.

Goals by Renato Busa, after 18 min, and Ciro Ferrara on the stroke of half-time gave Napoli a win that sets up a four-way battle with Torino, Roma and Foggia for Italy's fourth and final place in next season's UEFA Cup.

Everything will be decided next Sunday on the last day of the season when Foggia entertain Napoli and Torino take on Roma in the Olympic Stadium.

Parma, along with Lazio and Juventus, have already booked their UEFA Cup berth although they will vacate their spot for another team should they beat Arsenal and qualify for the cup winners cup.

AC Milan, crowned champions last weekend, will play in

the champions cup again and Sampdoria, who won the Italian Cup in midweek, will be in the cup winners cup.

Milan, who play their European Cup semi-final against Monaco Wednesday, fielded a half-strength side and were held 0-0 at Cagliari.

Napoli are currently level on points with Torino, who crashed to a 1-4 home defeat against Foggia, are now tied with Roma just one point behind.

Two first-half goals from midfielder Giovanni Stroppa, the first from the penalty spot, set Foggia on course for a major upset in Turin.

Pierpaolo Bresciani put the visitors three clear eight minutes after the break before Andrea Silenzi (74) pulled one back. It was to no avail however and Dutch winger Brian Roy completed the rout two minutes from time.

A 2-2 draw with Roma means Inter Milan's only way back into Europe is to win the UEFA Cup. They play the final first-leg against Austria's Casino Salzburg Tuesday.

Massimo Ciocci kept Roma's European dream alive with a crucial equaliser ten minutes from time in the San Siro Stadium. Giuseppe Giansini had put Roma ahead after 14 minutes with Daniele Fon-

tolan (22) and Nicola Berti (70) responding for Inter.

Lazio bounced back from last week's 6-1 humiliation inflicted by Juventus and beat bottom club Lecce 3-0 thanks to goals from Aaron Winter, Roberto Cravero and Croatian striker Alen Boksic.

At the bottom of the table, Lecce and Atlanta are already doomed to second division football and two more teams from Piacenza, Reggiana and Udinese will fall with them.

Piacenza and Reggiana are one point ahead of Udinese after holding, respectively, Juventus (0-0) and Sampdoria (1-1).

Udinese stayed alive with a 3-3 draw against Cremonese. A trip to Juventus next Sunday does not bode well for them however. Although Reggiana, who travel to AC Milan, and Piacenza, away to Parma, have equally difficult tasks.

One of the four places will be taken by Fiorentina.

The Florence club, relegated for the first time in its history last season, has bounced straight back and ensured a return to the top flight as second division champions by

beating Acireale 1-0 Sunday.

In France, where the French federation's decision to demote Marseille to second division football next season because of the match-rigging scandal in last season's league match with Valenciennes dominated the headlines, the shock home defeat in the cup of current league pacesetters Paris Saint Germain went almost unheralded.

Paris St. Germain saw their dream of competing the cup and league 'double' disappear when they were beaten by modest Lens. It was their first loss at the Parc des Princess all season.

Lens scored two late goals to overturn the Parisian cup holders' early lead.

Midfielder Vincent Guerin had opened the scoring for the home side but Roger Boli, brother of Marseille international defender Basile, netted after 70 minutes. Pierre Laigne added a second for Lens sixty seconds later.

Nantes also reached the semi-finals when they beat second division Valenciennes — reduced to ten men for the last quarter-of-an-hour — 3-1.

Reynald Pedros opened the scoring for Nantes by blasting home after 20 minutes. But Armand Dunccker intercepted a would-be clearance to put Valenciennes' back on level terms.

Nantes made the most of their chance when Valenciennes' captain Antoine Difrava was ordered off in the 74th minute for a second booking — Nicolas Ouedec scoring from the penalty spot and Jean-Michel Ferri putting matters beyond doubt three minutes from time.

Barcelona closed to within two points of pacesetters Deportivo la Coruna in the race for the Spanish title thanks to an emphatic 4-0 away win against Celta Vigo on Saturday.

Deportivo la Coruna drew 0-0 at Lerida.

Bulgarian front-runner Hristo Stoichkov scored twice for Barcelona and Guillermo Amor and Esteban were also on target.

With just three matches left to play Deportivo have 52 points from 35 games and Barcelona have 50.

Real Madrid were jeered off the pitch when they were beaten 0-2 at home by Real Sociedad, and Zaragoza went down 3-0 at Valencia.

Bayern Munich stayed top in Germany — two points clear of Kaiserslautern — after clinching a controversial 2-1 victory over Nuremberg.

Nuremberg came off pitch demanding a replay, claiming one of the Bayern goals had failed to cross the line.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Zhirinovsky declines Iraqi invitation

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky has declined an invitation from Saddam Hussein to attend his 57th birthday celebrations, saying he has political obligations in Russia, sources close to Dr. Zhirinovsky said Monday. Mr. Zhirinovsky, president of the far-right Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), had been invited to go to Baghdad for the celebrations Thursday, an LDP representative said. He could not go because Thursday was the day scheduled for signature in Moscow of a civil peace pact, aimed at preventing political violence in Russia. Mr. Zhirinovsky has indicated that he will sign the document. The LDP representative said it was possible another LDP leader might go to Baghdad in Mr. Zhirinovsky's place. Mr. Zhirinovsky gave his backing to Iraq during the Gulf war, and sponsored the sending of Russian volunteers to fight on the side of the Iraqi forces. At the beginning of April, he invited the Iraqi leader to the LDP congress. President Saddam did not go, but sent a delegation from Iraq's ruling party.

Wife of Hebron killer complains to police

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The wife of Hebron killer Baruch Goldstein has complained to police for failing to seek out the Palestinians who beat him to death after he massacred more than 30 worshippers in a mosque in the West Bank town, Israeli police said Monday. Spokesman Eric Bar Chen said Myriam Goldstein filed her complaint on Friday at the police station in Kyriat Arba, the Jewish settlement where she and her husband lived on the edge of Hebron. She urged police to find the Palestinians who beat her husband to death with iron bars after he gunned down worshippers in the Ibrahim Mosque on Feb. 25, the spokesman told AFP. The supreme court, meanwhile, turned down calls from Tel Aviv lawyers to evict the only Arab judge on the committee of inquiry into the massacre, Ahmad Zoabi, and dismissed allegations that he was biased against settlers.

Manila approves sending workers to Israel

MANILA (AP) — The Department of Labour and employment has endorsed sending Filipino farm workers to Israel following that country's decision to hire more foreigners to replace Arab labourers. Labour Under-Secretary Jose Brilantes said in a departmental memo that the Philippines would benefit because workers would return home with advanced farming skills. "By officially allowing Filipino workers to Israel, we shall also be able to legalise the status of more than 15,000 Filipinos now working in Israel as tourists and undocumented aliens," Mr. Brilantes said. Currently, the department has certified only maids and babysitters for work in Israel because of the uncertain security situation and the abundance of Arab labour there. The Israeli cabinet recently approved plans to increase hiring of foreigners to replace Arabs from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Iran blames Iraq-based group for attack

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said a man arrested after an attack on an Iranian cleric last week had links with the dissident Iraq-based Mujahideen-e-Khalq organisation. (MKO), the official Iranian IRNA news agency said. An information (intelligence) ministry official identified the man responsible for shooting Hojatoleslam Mohammad Abaei Khorasani in the holy city of Mashhad after Friday prayers, as Ali Houri, nick-named Popi. "The information ministry official, asked to comment on the motives of the attack, said the MKO because of its nature will not abandon its terrorism," IRNA reported late on Sunday. The group, often blamed by Tehran for acts of sabotage and shootings, has denied responsibility for the attack. Houri tried to kill himself after the attack and the Iranian official said he later underwent surgery at Imam Redha hospital in Mashhad. Hojatoleslam Khorasani, who was hit by two bullets in the back, was recovering at Qaem hospital, said the official who was identified by IRNA simply as Musavi-Nejad.

Rabbi calls for Arafat's assassination

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Rabbi Shlomo Goren, a former Israeli army chaplain, called Monday for the murder of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. "If a Jew decides to eliminate the biggest of murderers, Yasser Arafat, who is the Hitler of our day, I will support him and declare a holiday on the day of his assassination," the Rabbi told Maariv newspaper. Rabbi Goren, who was chaplain during the 1967 Middle East war when Israel seized the West Bank and Gaza Strip, called for the creation of an organisation "to prevent Arafat from stepping foot on our territory." A fierce opponent of the Israel-Palestinian accord on Palestinian self-rule, the Rabbi has already urged soldiers to disobey orders if the government decided to dismantle Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Conference of Somali factions postponed

NAIROBI (AFP) — A conference bringing together the main factions in Somalia and due to have begun in Mogadishu on Monday has been postponed, a United Nations spokesman said. A new date for the session, which is to prepare the ground for a conference of national reconciliation, has not been fixed but spokesman George Bennett told AFP by telephone from Mogadishu that the meeting was likely to be held early next month. The idea of holding the preparatory conference came into being on March 24 when faction leader Mohamed Farah Aideded and his rival, self-styled President Ali Mahdi Mohammad, signed a U.N.-brokered national reconciliation agreement in Nairobi.

Two Israeli-allied militiamen wounded

MARIYOUN (AP) — A roadside bomb exploded in South Lebanon Monday, wounding two members of a patrol of Israeli-allied militiamen, security sources said. Hizbollah guerrillas claimed responsibility for the attack. Security sources said the 10:15 a.m. (0715 GMT) bomb went off as a mechanised patrol of the Israeli-aided South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia drove through the village of Rihan in Israel's so-called "security zone" in southern Lebanon. The Rihan area is a key infiltration route used by guerrillas of Hizbollah to attack Israeli troops and SLA militiamen. The main road linking the town of Jezzeine with Marjayoun, another major town in the enclave Israel occupies in South Lebanon, passes through Rihan.

Iran sues group for abducting diplomats

BEIRUT (R) — Iran is suing a banned Lebanese Christian group for kidnapping three Iranian diplomats during the Lebanese civil war, Tehran's ambassador to Beirut said on Monday. Homayoun Alizadeh told reporters the law suit charged Lebanese Forces (LF) militiamen with kidnapping Taji Rastegar Moqaddam, Kazem Akhavan and Ahmad Motevasselian in 1982 at a roadblock. He said he relayed a message to Foreign Minister Faris Bouez from his Iranian counterpart Ali Velayati informing him of the case. Security sources believe the three Iranians and their Lebanese driver Mohsen Mousawi were killed shortly after their abduction at the LF checkpoint at the village of Barbara in northern Lebanon. LF chief Samir Geagea and several of his followers are under arrest in connection with a February church bombing and the assassination of a Christian rival in 1990.

Pakistani opposition decides to resign

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Opposition members of Parliament (MPs) on Monday decided to resign en masse in protest against "unconstitutional" changes in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), former Premier Nawaz Sharif said here. Mr. Sharif told a news conference that the MPs handed their signed resignation letters to him. "authorising me to submit them to the house speaker at an appropriate time."



SEARCHING FOR CLUES: South African policemen with dogs look towards a victim who died in an explosion in a township outside Johannesburg on Monday. At least 10 people were killed in the car-bomb (see page one) (AFP photo)

Israel cannot keep Golan and have peace with Syria — Peres

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel cannot keep the occupied Golan Heights if it wants peace with Syria, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said on Monday.

Parliamentary sources quoted Mr. Peres as telling the Labour parliamentary group that "any reasonable person knows you cannot have peace and still keep the Golan."

"It is clear that any Israeli withdrawal will mean the dismantling of Jewish settlements (on the Golan)," he said.

On Thursday Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin gave the clearest signal so far that he would evacuate Israeli settlements from the Golan in return for peace with Syria.

"For me the importance of the Golan plateau is above all for security, whether there are settlements on it or not," he said. "If we have to take down settlements for peace, I was and I am in favour of that."

Israel seized the Golan during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war

and "annexed" the strategic heights in 1981. Some 12,000 Jewish settlers live there.

The Syrian government newspaper Tishrin said Sunday the Israeli prime minister had "taken a step forward, but peace comes with action, not words."

"Rabin knows perfectly well that there can be no peace with Syria unless he gives back all the Golan," the paper said.

The Israeli-Syrian peace talks are stalled over Syria's demand for a prior Israeli pledge to return all the Golan Heights and Mr. Rabin's demand that Damascus first commit itself to a full peace with open borders.

Another Syrian newspaper Monday accused Mr. Rabin of using his current visit to Moscow to encourage further emigration of Russian Jews for settlement in the occupied Arab territories.

The daily, Al Baath, organ of the ruling Baath Party, said

the effort contradicted Mr. Rabin's recent statements about dismantling settlements in the Golan Heights.

"How could anyone accept the idea of dismantling the settlements and establishing new ones instead," it asked. Mr. Rabin began a four-day visit to Moscow Monday by meeting with his Russian counterpart, Victor Chernomyrdin, to discuss the Middle East peace process (see separate story). Russia is co-sponsoring the peace talks with the United States.

Another topic on Mr. Rabin's agenda is emigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union. Since the Soviet Union loosened restrictions on emigration in the late 1980s, more than 400,000 Jews have moved to Israel.

"Rabin's primary talks in the Russian capital will centre on the issue of bringing new Russian Jews for settlement in occupied Arab territories," Al Baath claimed.

Russia signs agreements with Israel, assures Jews of safety

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russia and Israel signed a series of accords Monday to strengthen trade ties as Moscow downplayed fears of anti-Semitism, saying Jews were safe here despite a surge of anti-Semitic forces in the country.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin also told reporters after his talks with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that Moscow could contribute to stability in the Mideast through a more "active" role in the Mideast peace process.

"A substantial number of Jews live in Russia. But they are not threatened by any anti-Semitism," Mr. Chernomyrdin stated in what Tass news agency described as an "emotional" response to reporter's questions.

"No Zhirinovsky can unleash a wave of anti-Semitism," the Russian premier added, referring to the ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, whose public appearances are often punctuated by strongly anti-Semitic remarks. Mr. Zhirinovsky's Liberal

Democratic Party (LDP) scored a stunning upset in last December's legislative elections and is one of the two most powerful parties in the lower house of the new parliament.

MR. Chernomyrdin, quoted by Itar-Tass, admitted that there were forces in Russia that sought "to make the situation more tense by stressing the national question," but said anti-Semitic and fascist groups had only marginal support.

The Russian premier held talks with Mr. Rabin at the government headquarters and the two leaders signed six bilateral accords including a convention on double-taxation, and an accord on cooperation in science and technology.

Mr. Chernomyrdin told Itar-Tass news agency that he and Mr. Rabin had also instructed their delegation to prepare a "wide-ranging" bilateral trade and economic pact which he said could be signed during Mr. Rabin's four-day visit to Russia.

On the Mideast, Mr. Chernomyrdin stated that Russia's position remained "unchanged" and was centred on the need for a peaceful, negotiated accord on Palestinian self-rule.

Russia, along with the United States, remains a co-sponsor of the Mideast peace process launched in September 1991 in Madrid, but up to now has had little real influence on the course of Israeli-Arab peace talks.

Earlier this year, President Boris Yeltsin dispatched a special envoy to the region in an effort to raise Russia's profile in the negotiations.

But a subsequent proposal from Moscow to organise a "second Madrid" international conference on the Mideast was greeted coolly by the United States and essentially rejected by Israel as unnecessarily complicated.

Moscow last week hosted Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat on a three-day visit and reaffirmed its support.

11 militant suspects shot dead in Egypt

CAIRO (Agencies) — A man described as the most wanted Islamic militant in Egypt was killed along with 10 other suspected fundamentalists in two shootouts on Monday, security sources said.

Taatar Yassin Hammam and six other militants were shot dead in a flat in the east Cairo suburb of Kobri Al Kobba when police went to arrest them early on Monday morning, the sources said.

Police said the militants opened fire first but it is not known if any policemen were killed or hurt. Interior Ministry officials were not available for comment.

Hammam was sentenced to death in absentia in 1992 for belonging to an illegal organisation and trying to overthrow the Egyptian government.

He and the other militants on trial were believed to have fought alongside Afghan Mujahideen during the Soviet occupation in the 1980s and were known as Arab Afghans.

Police said he was the leader of militants fighting to set up an Islamic state in Egypt and that he was the link with militant leaders in exile.

Police found a fax machine in the flat where Hammam was killed. They said it was used to relay information between

Hammam and militants abroad.

The Interior Ministry published photographs of Hammam and two other wanted militants in February and promised rewards for citizens who gave information on them.

Hammam is also accused of trying to ambush an army general car in Cairo last July. Four people including two of the attackers were killed and six civilians were wounded.

Police say he had organised a series of bombs planted outside Cairo banks in February and March and was wanted in connection with 20 other criminal cases, including the assassination of police Brigadier Shireen Ali Fahmi in the southern city of Assiut last week.

Security forces in Assiut shot dead four militants in a shootout before dawn, police sources said.

Meanwhile, a militant was wounded and 17 others were arrested during a major police dragnet in Sobag governorate, 100 kilometres south of Assiut.

Monday's deaths raised to 378 the number of people killed since the militants launched their violent anti-government campaign two years ago. The dead include 134 policemen and 135 militants.

National interests will guide decision on TCC project — Majali

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Monday left the door open for allowing a company on the Arab League's boycott list to secure a multi-million dollar telecommunications contract. The government-owned Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) accepted a bid last week from a Jordanian company in partnership with Motorola, a firm listed on the boycott list, to build and operate a nationwide cellular network.

"We have not made a final decision... we will look into the boycott and a decision will be taken in the right interest," Dr. Majali said. "It is not easy to say you cannot touch the boycott," the premier told foreign and local journalists in a question-answer session Monday, indicating that national interest will be the overriding factor in any consideration.

The secondary and tertiary boycott bars companies with substantial investments in Israel and those which deal with a blacklisted company to avoid being blacklisted themselves respectively from doing business in the Arab World.

Motorola, which operates Israel's cellular network and maintains manufacturing facilities there, bid in partnership with the Jordan Mobile Telephone Services Company, whose local investors include the Housing Bank, the Arab Banking Corporation (ABC), the Union Bank for Investments and Mid Investments

and others. Jordan insists on maintaining the boycott until a peaceful settlement is reached with Israel and Amman reaffirmed this position last month at an Arab League meeting in Cairo. Dr. Majali, pointing out that there were many exceptions to the boycott, said the military had purchased Motorola equipment and spare parts, including the walkie talkies it now uses.

He said Motorola equipment had been widely used in the Arab World, justifying why Jordan may accept Motorola's offer, which came first in the bids. The group's offer was JD38 million, almost twice that of the second highest bidder.

Minister of Telecommunications Tareq Suheimat said earlier that it was "a political decision" whether to award Motorola the contract if it meets all other requirements.

Jordan has come under American and European pressure to ease the boycott of Israel, which was implemented 43 years ago to isolate the Jewish state and prevent league members from carrying out any commercial activity with it.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, in a visit to the region last January, said fresh American investment in Jordan depended on removal of trade barriers and the lifting of the secondary boycott that primarily affects U.S. companies. Jordan has told Washington it was adopting a case-by-case approach to the secondary and tertiary boycott, according to officials and diplomats.

COLUMN

Prince Edward walks down the aisle...

LONDON (R) — Britain's Prince Edward caused a stir in the tabloid press Monday by walking down the aisle with his girlfriend Sophie Rhys-Jones, but only as a guest at a royal cousin's wedding. The 30-year-old budding television producer and his publicist girlfriend, 29, put in a joint appearance Sunday at a high-society wedding, adding fuel to media speculation of a flourishing royal romance. The wedding outing coincided with mounting expectation that Prince Edward, a former theatre assistant who has now established his own television production company, will soon announce his engagement to Ms. Rhys-Jones. The couple travelled together to the wedding in Suffolk, eastern England, and were accompanied by the queen's sister Princess Margaret, who acted as a royal chaperone to Princess Diana during her engagement to Prince Charles. The popular press, relishing the possibility of a royal darning to replace Princess Diana, cooed in delight at Ms. Rhys-Jones' dramatic outfit — a scarlet mandarin-style jacket and long black skirt split to the thigh. Today newspaper called the occasion a dress rehearsal for a royal wedding later this year. The tabloids have christened Ms. Rhys-Jones the spitting image of the young Princess Diana because of her short blonde hair but the public relations executive is older, shorter, and more overtly confident than the putative princess was. The prince, the queen's youngest child, is said to be keen to have a low-key wedding, in contrast to his elder brothers Prince Andrew and Charles whose spectacular nuptials ended only in broken marriages. The reports of the wedding said the prince and Ms. Rhys-Jones sat side-by-side in the church pew and listened intently as their friends, Lord Ivor Mountbatten and Penny Thompson, made their marriage vows.

Australian hero's ashes scattered at death railway

HELLFIRE PASS, Thailand (R) — The ashes of Australian war hero Sir Edward Dunlop were scattered Monday in a ceremony recalling the ordeal of allied prisoners of war who worked on this stretch of Japan's infamous "death railway." "Weary" Dunlop, as he was known to Australians for the way he fought fatigue to save hundreds of lives, asked before he died in Melbourne last year that his remains be sent to join those of World War II comrades lost at Hellfire Pass. About 500 people, including Dunlop's sons John and Alexander, diplomats and Australian survivors, took part in an early-morning ceremony, illuminated by candles to recreate the eerie, tomb-like atmosphere of the pass in wartime 1943. Prisoners gave this section of the railway the name Hellfire Pass because the naked, skeleton-like figures slaving in the half-light seemed to conjure up visions of the inferno. Using minimal equipment, the prisoners of war (PoWs) worked 12 to 18-hour shifts for 12 weeks, cutting through solid rock and soil to cleave the mountain pass. Two-thirds of the 1,000 PoWs working on the pass died and were buried in a nearby cemetery.

Schindler's list win's top U.K. film award

LONDON (AP) — Schindler's List, Steven Spielberg's Oscar-winning film about the Holocaust, was named the year's best film by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, and won Spielberg another trophy for Best Director. Spielberg came to the stage again to receive the People's Film Award for Jurassic Park. "Between Schindler and Jurassic, I'm going to need years of therapy," Spielberg joked about the disparity between the two pictures. The director later appeared at the end of the ceremony to present a Special Achievement Award to British actor-director Lord Attenborough, who starred in Jurassic Park. The Best Actress prize went to Holly Hunter for her performance in The Piano, for which she won the Oscar last month.